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ELVIE THE FOUNDLING:

—OR,—

THE HOMICIDE OF HAZLEHURST.

A TALE OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

BY MRS. CAROLINE ORNE

[CONTINUED.]

CHAPTER XVI. [CONTINUED]

HERBERT at once recognized the handwriting to be Elvie's, and unfolding it he hurriedly glanced over the contents.

"How came you by this?" said he, when he had finished reading it; "did Valmont give it to you?"

She smiled somewhat scornfully as she replied, "I'm not Jarvis Valmont's confidant, that he should give me his stolen letters."

"I can well believe you, and you must pardon the question; for after what you have said, I could hardly imagine how else it could fall into your hands."

"I found it in one of the chambers of a certain hotel, occupied by him, when he was in the city, a short time since. He dropped it there accidentally, I presume."

"And do you know how he came by it?"

"No, though I suppose by no fair means."

"You have read the letter?"

"Yes, I read it, because I saw it was written by Elvie Hunsdon—not from a mean curiosity to pry into what wasn't intended for my eye."

"You are acquainted with Elvie Hunsdon, then?"

"So far from it, that I've never even seen her."

"Why so interested in her then?"

"That I cannot tell you now."

"You merely sought this interview to give me this letter?"

"Yes, for I thought it might prevent mischief, and be the means of doing good in another way."

"Why so?"

"I have known lovers' quarrels to arise from a slighter cause, than failing to receive an answer to a letter, and I thought I might say a few words relative to the allusion Miss Hunsdon makes to her parentage."

"You have reference to what she writes, as respects the objections raised by my father, on account of its obscurity?"

"Yes."

"And you, perhaps, know who her parents were?"

"I do, and you may tell your father, that hers were gentlefolks, worthy to rank with the highest and the best in the land."

"But the proof—give me that. My father will be satisfied with nothing short of it."

"Hereafter, but not now, it shall be given."

"Delay may be fatal to the happiness of more than one. Will you not name a time, though distant, when it can be given?"

"No, I can only repeat, that it shall be given hereafter."

"Hereafter is a time, very indefinite. It may mean either weeks or years."

"It is indefinite, but it must, nevertheless, content you. I can never consent, by a premature disclosure, to strike the blow which will send the only person to perdition, with whom I can claim kindred. He is on the high road to ruin, and will reach the goal quite soon enough, without my aid."

"You will not even tell me the name of Elvie Hunsdon's parents?"

"No."

Without hinting, that he suspected Valmont would be the person injured, by what she termed a premature disclosure, he inquired if she had heard that Mr. Hunsdon had been arrested for murder.

"Arrested for murder, did you say?" said she with startling emphasis.

"I did."

"No, I had not heard of it. Whom is he accused of having murdered?"

"A man by the name of Harder."

"He never did it."

"Why are you so certain?"

"He had no reason for committing such a crime. I wish that some others I knew, had had as little."

"It is thought by some, that Mr. Hunsdon had a reason. In one of the papers I saw it intimated, that he was owing Harder a heavy debt, contracted when he was at the South."

"If true, that might have been a reason, if Hunsdon was like some I have heard of. But I know it to be false. He didn't owe Harder a shilling."

"If you can produce evidence of what you say, which will be received in a court of justice, it may help save the life of an innocent man."

"And can you ask me to save him, by what will destroy one, who was once dear to me, as if he had been my own child? No matter—he has dug a pit—let him fall into it. I too have sinned, and deserve to be punished, and punishment will reach me through him. What you have told me will hasten the time when I can prove to your father, that it will be an honor, rather than a disgrace, for his son to marry her, who is now known by the name of Elvie Hunsdon."

Having said thus, she rose.

"I must go now," said she.

"Not till you tell me your name, and where you can be found."

Without answering him, she stepped to a table on which were materials for writing, and wrote a few words on a slip of paper.

"This," said she, handing it to him, "will tell you what you wish to know."

When she was gone, he again read Elvie's letter, and with more care, although hastily as he had glanced over it, a second perusal showed that not a word had escaped him. It was in answer to one he wrote her, soon after they last met, and in which she mentioned having seen Valmont the Sunday after his departure from Hazlehurst, and that she disliked both his looks and appearance, though she found that by many, he was thought to be very handsome, and seemed to be in a fair way to buy golden opinions from all sorts of men."

The general tone of the letter was full of trust and confidence in himself, and at its close, she remarked, that there was nothing which more consoled her at the thought of the long separation to which they were destined, than frequent opportunities to renew by writing, the promise she made him during his last visit, to remain true to him.

Herbert was now convinced that the book shown him by Valmont, which had so excited his jealousy—a jealousy which had been heightened by the non-reception of the letter which he held in his hand, had been obtained without the concurrence of Elvie. His thoughts next turned to what had been said by the woman. "All," he said mentally, "may yet so turn out, as to be satisfactory, even to my father—or it might, if this dark cloud had not gathered over John Hunsdon. 'He never did it,' so my strange visitor said, and she was right—I am certain she was."

The opening of the parlor door, by permitting the voices of those within to reach his ear, now reminded him that it was time for him to return.

"Your visitor proved to be very pleasant and agreeable, I suspect, by your being so long absent," said his aunt, as he re-entered the room.

"She came on business," he replied, gravely.

"Ah, 'twas a lady, then?'

"Yes."

"And young and handsome, as may be naturally inferred, or you would have remembered that your father had no one to assist in the task of entertaining two weary travellers," said Mrs. Carlton.

"She was not young," said Herbert, absently; and seating himself a little apart from the rest, he soon became lost to all that was present, by permitting his thoughts to revert to the conversation between him and his recent visitor, whose name, by reference to what she had written on the slip of paper, he found to be Julia Sandoval.

"One might imagine he was changed into stone," said Mrs. Carlton, having with an affectation of much gravity regarded him for a minute or more, as he sat silent and motionless.

"Herbert," said his father, abruptly and rather sharply, "have you forgotten that you are not alone?"

Herbert started, as if suddenly roused from a dream, and attempted to apologize, for being so absent-minded.

"I begin to entertain serious fears," said his aunt, "that your lady visitor wore a Gorgon's head."

"Why?" said Herbert, laughingly.

"Because, after carefully watching you till I was tired, I couldn't find that you even winked."

"I was thinking," said Herbert.

His eyes as he spoke, met Helen's.

"And the thoughts, whatever they may have been," said his cousin, "have breathed into the statue the breath of life."

And it was so. The listlessness which for the last few weeks had made him rise each morning without aim or purpose, was gone. Life, strong and vivid, was stirring within him. The desire to be up and doing, was so urgent, as to be even painful. Elvie was true to him—John Hunsdon was guiltless, and Valmont was a liar and a murderer. But to prove all this, there must be energy, action and perseverance. If he was only finishing, instead of commencing his legal studies, the resolution and zeal, tempered by the patience necessary for investigation which he would bring to the task, made him confident that he could search out some clue, which if diligently followed up, would lead to the detection of him who was guilty.

"It shall be done," said he, mentally, though with so much earnestness, and energy of feeling, that involuntarily, he brought his hand down upon the table that stood near him, with a force which caused a perceptible jar. This brought him to himself, and as he saw a smile flit over his aunt's face, he felt confused, and a little ashamed.

Helen, who, as well as her mother, had been intently regarding him, had no disposition to smile, for his deep, dark eyes spoke so eloquently, that she could divine what was passing in his mind, so far as to know that he was moved by some strong and noble purpose, such as honors and exalts humanity.

"I like you better than I thought I should, cousin Herbert," said Helen, in a voice too low to be heard except by himself.

"And I can say the same to cousin Helen," he replied, in accents equally low.

CHAPTER XVII.

INTERVIEW BETWEEN HERBERT AND HELEN.

MRS. CARLTON having the following morning intimated a wish to see some old friends living in the city, who proved to be among Mr. Beverly's most familiar acquaintance, they concluded to waive all ceremony, and call in the evening and spend an hour or two. Helen declined accompanying them, and her mother and Mr. Beverly were secretly pleased with her so doing, when they found that Herbert intended to remain at home. Herbert, however, imagined that she was to go with them, and counted on having an evening quite to himself, which would enable him to write to Mr. Wingrove, all that he knew and believed, as respected those subjects nearest his heart, and to request that he would communicate to him such incidents as had come to his knowledge, which might in any way have a bearing on them, however slight or indirect.

Feeling it to be a duty to keep the fire bright in the parlor, that it might be warm and comfortable when they returned, as soon as he heard the front door open and close, after which all was silent, he left the little snug room where he would have preferred to remain, and entered the larger apartment, where his father always chose to spend his evenings. He had seated himself in front of the grate to collect his thoughts, preparatory to commencing the letter he wished to write, when there was a light though by no means an undecided rap at the door.

His first impulse was to invite the person, whoever it might be, to enter; but something which passed through his mind caused him to change his purpose, and he rose and opened the door.

"Cousin Helen!" said he, with a voice and look indicating surprise.

"May I come in?" said she.

"Do you think it necessary to ask?"

"I thought you looked as if you hardly expected me to intrude on your solitude."

"I didn't expect to see you, most certainly, for I thought you had gone with your mother, to call on some of her old friends."

"No, they are people I never saw, and I didn't feel in a mood for making new acquaintances. I preferred to spend the evening with you. I have something I wish to say to you."

This frank avowal—while he did not forget to answer her with all proper respect and courtesy—caused him to look at her rather inquisitively; but there was no drooping of the eyelids, nor even the dawn of a blush, to show that she felt conscious of having said anything which transcended the limits of womanly reserve. She noticed and understood this inquisitorial examination of her countenance, as might have been seen by a furtive, and nearly imperceptible smile.

She had meanwhile seated herself in a deep, luxurious chair, lined with crimson velvet, which Herbert had placed for her near the fire. There was a certain air of freedom in the way her superb head, with its wealth of raven hair, was set on her finely formed shoulders, and a delicate, yet delicious bloom of complexion, now warmed into a richer glow by the reflection of the crimson velvet against which she leaned, that were in fine harmony with her classic features, and could not fail to challenge his admiration.

A silence of several minutes which was beginning to be rather awkward, was broken by Helen.

"You know," said she, "why my mother and I were invited to make this visit—do you not?"

"My father said that he wished to show some attention to the widow of my mother's only brother."

"That answered for an ostensible reason—as to the real one, I can hardly believe that you are so dull as to misapprehend it. It was with some difficulty that my mother persuaded me to come with her, though now, I feel very thankful that she *did* persuade me."

Herbert looked as if he would like that she should make known the reason of her thankfulness, though he did not ask. She understood the look, and replied the same as if he had spoken.

"It is on your account, even more than my own," she said, "that I am thankful. I had little doubt, last evening, from certain slight manifestations, that your affections were engaged, and this morning I found I was right."

"How?"

"By overhearing a conversation not intended for my ears, but which, as I was in an adjoining apartment, and the door ajar, I could not well avoid hearing."

"Yes, and to confess the truth, the possibility of bringing about a match between you and me was discussed in a manner too unequivocal to be mistaken. But don't be alarmed. If cousin Herbert has a will of his own, so has cousin Helen, and she promises to set her face against the match, as firmly as he can possibly do. If his heart is disposed of, so is hers. I found by what I heard this morning, that unless it can be proved that a man by the name of John Hunsdon is guiltless of the crime laid to his charge, that your father will not consent that you should marry his adopted daughter."

"No, he will not."

"Then it *must* be proved that he isn't guilty."

"I came to that conclusion last night. The woman who sought an interview with me, told me that which made me determine, that if in the power of man to do it, it shall be done."

"Will it not depend much on the prisoner's counsel?"

"It will."

"Do you know if any one is yet engaged for that purpose?"

"I think there is not. The trial will not be for some time yet."

"Then I will venture,"—she hesitated, and a sudden crimson flashed across her brow.

"Venture what?" said Herbert.

"To recommend a young man of my acquaintance."

"He stands high, of course."

"As yet, he has had no opportunity to make a reputation, but I think I may say I know he has the right kind of talent for what will be required in a case like the one in question."

"You will pardon me if I say, that I should hardly have expected a lady so young as you to be a competent judge."

"You don't think me too young for the exercise of common sense?"

"By no means."

"And that is all that is necessary to enable me to judge. At any rate, if a clear head, earnest endeavor, and one of those practical minds which has the acuteness to see, and the power to seize on any point which if not very obvious, may be turned to advantage—to say nothing of a spirit so hopeful, that it will neither droop nor be discouraged—be a recommendation, he possesses them all, in no stinted measure."

"What is his name?"

"Edward Stafford."

"Can he be obtained?"

"I know he can. If he is successful, it will make him a name, and that will be a foundation on which to build a fortune."

"He is not rich then?"

"He is penniless."

"You seem much interested about this young lawyer."

"I am, and have reason to be, having very indiscreetly—so thinks my mother—given him reason to believe, that I shall not refuse his hand when two years hence, I come into possession of a handsome fortune."

"Which I should think, would be enough for you both."

"And so it would be. My mother doesn't pretend to deny *that*, but according to her views, the rich should marry the rich."

"Well, Mr. Stafford may be rich some day. I am pleased with your description of him, and after consulting some of Mr. Hunsdon's friends, will, if they don't object, write to him on the subject."

Helen gave him the young lawyer's address, and then withdrew to her room. This gave Herbert time to write to Mr. Wingrove, whom he now intended to consult, as to the expediency of employing Edward Stafford as counsel for the prisoner.

CHAPTER XVIII.

VALMONT IN THE CHAMBER OF DEATH.

WHEN Valmont left Simpson's hotel, for the purpose of attempting to find the missing ring, it was with many misgivings. As it was rather large for his finger, removing his glove in haste would have readily caused it to slip off. As he thought of this, he noticed for the first time, that cold as the morning was, his hands were uncovered. He felt in his pocket for his gloves, and found that one of them was gone. When perfectly satisfied of this, large drops of perspiration started to his forehead, for he knew, that being marked with the initials of his name, if found by any one belonging to Hazlehurst, it would at once be recognized as his.

"It was on *that* spot," he said to himself. "I must have dropped them—both the ring and the glove."

Once he thought of riding on a little further, where he remembered an unfrequented road turned to the right, and attempt to make his escape. It was, however, almost instantly abandoned, as it would look like guilt, and might direct suspicion against himself, even, as he endeavored to believe, that neither the glove nor ring had yet been found. The chances, he imagined were against their being found, though they grew less and less, with the passing of each minute. This, he fully realized, and putting spurs to his horse, he rode at a furious rate for half a mile where the road was lonely and uninhabited, after which, he felt himself obliged to go more slowly, lest he should attract attention.

When arrived at Wait's hotel, there were several standing about the door, and comparatively a large number were in the bar-room. All looked grave and serious, speaking to each other in suppressed voices, for death was in one of the chambers, and the cry of the victim, now so cold and silent, had startled many of them from their midnight slumbers.

There was sorrow as well as awe, depicted in the countenances of many, but their sorrow was for the living, rather than the dead. John Hunsdon, their friend and neighbor, by this time within the walls of the county jail, was beloved and esteemed by all.

"You have heard the news?" said the landlord, as Valmont alighted from his horse.

"Yes, it was at the village before sunrise, I believe, though I heard nothing about it, till I went down to breakfast."

"You staid at Simpson's last night?"

"Yes, and I'm glad I was there."

"Where is Mr. Docker?"

"He's at Simpson's. He'll be along after awhile."

Perceiving that several were edging up towards him, and feeling somewhat relieved, by finding that no one appeared to regard him with su-picion, he thought he would go to his room, whence he hoped to find an opportunity to slip out by the back entrance unobserved, where by taking a circuitous direction, he could reach the spot, where he was nearly certain he had lost his glove and perhaps his ring.

Quickly ascending the stairs and opening the door of his chamber, which he closed behind him, he advanced nearly to the centre of the room, when with an exclamation of horror he started back. On one side of the apartment, a little raised from the floor, was spread a thin, white counterpane, which had settled down, so as to show the fixed and rigid outlines of a human form. He had reached the door, and his hand was on the latch, when, as if by some invisible power, which he could not resist, he was attracted slowly, inch by inch, as it were, till he was at the side of him, who stark and cold, lay beneath the smooth white linen, which was so thin and transparent, that a dark, crimson stain on the left side, a little below the full, broad chest—the promise of long and vigorous life—gleamed through it. As he stood rooted to the spot, with glaring and dilated eyes, and an icy horror creeping through every vein, the covering with a slow, waving motion, rose and fell.

"Has he returned to life?" said he, in a hoarse whisper. "It cannot be. The blow was well aimed, and is struck home."

At that moment, it seemed as if an arm was

moved slowly across the breast. In an ecstacy of fear, he snatched aside the covering, but there was no life—nothing but the stern, immovable features of death.

"It must have been a fiend, that was sent to mock me with the semblance of life," said he, but the next moment he smiled at the weakness which made him superstitious.

"I didn't know that you had come back, Mr. Valmont," said a voice behind him.

He started as if he had been pierced by an arrow.

"It is only I," said the voice.

He turned and saw a middle-aged woman, who on special occasions was called in to assist Mrs. Wait and Peggy.

"Why was my room turned into a charnel-house," he angrily demanded, "because I was absent a night?"

"Why no harm was meant, sir, I'm sure; but there was so much company here last night, we were obliged to make use of it."

"Wasn't there another room in the house, that could be used for such a purpose?"

"O yes, sir, but this was the best chamber, and we all concluded, for that reason, it was more decent for so solemn a purpose. There's a good fire in the next chamber, where a traveller lodged last night, and if you—"

"Do you see that?" said he, interrupting her.

"See what?"

"Look! He moves. This is too horrible!"

"Why, bless you, sir, 'tis the wind that moves that covering. There's a hard north-easter blowing, and as you see, the windows are all open."

"Yes, 'tis the wind. I see now."

"May be, you'd like to look at him, sir?"

He made no answer, and she went on.

"He has," she said, "a kind of hard, fierce look. A gentleman who staid here last night, and has seen men who were slain in battle, said that those that died from the stab of a bayonet, always had the same angry, furious look, as when fighting for their lives, while those who were shot had a peaceful, pleasant look, as if they were asleep. Did you say that you would like to look at him?"

"No, no," enforcing what he said with a quick, emphatic motion of his hand, for she had already taken hold of the covering to turn it back from the face.

"Well, sir, I thought I'd ask you, for the thought of his having been murdered is so solemn and awful, and it's so strange that such a thing should be done right at our own door, as 'twere, and in such a friendly and peaceful neighborhood, that almost everybody wants to look at him, and they seem to dread it, too. I did at first, but I don't mind it now. Why how pale you look, sir. It seems to me that John Hunsdon, himself, couldn't look whiter and more ghastly, if he stood on the very spot that you do. I must go now. As I was passing the door, I thought I heard some one speak, and so I looked in."

"Did I speak? What did I say?"

"Not much of anything. Something about his coming to life, I believe. But there's no danger of that."

"Who said there was danger? And if there was, why should I fear?"

"I know of no reason why you should. But as I said, I must go now, and perhaps you don't care to stay longer yourself? There's a deadly chill about the room."

A shudder, as if in confirmation of this last assertion, was the only notice he took of what she said, as he quickly passed her and left the room.

When he was fairly beyond the threshold, for the first time since the moment he entered the chamber, he recalled to mind why he had left the village in such haste.

"Fool that I've been," said he, grinding his teeth, "when I knew that every minute that passes may be the minute too late."

He left the house, and then looking in every direction, so as to assure himself that no one was in sight, he flew rather than ran across the fields, till he came in view of the tree, whose huge trunk had hidden him in its shadow only a few hours previous, while awaiting the approach of his victim.

Having crept warily along, till arrived within a short distance of the tree, he saw some one suddenly emerge from behind it. It was Joseph Brooks, towards whom he entertained an aversion, for which he could not well account, and which was fully reciprocated. As he crept closer to the stone wall, which separated the field from the high road, and crouched behind it, he saw him stoop and pick something up, which he appeared to examine with great attention.

"The minute too late," said he, bitterly, "and I am lost. The demon that tempted me to the deed—so I must believe—held me back in the shape of that chattering old woman. But it sha'n't hold me now in that shape, or any other."

He started up with a sudden energy. He would go and ask the boy what he had found; and if, as he feared, it was the glove, or the ring, or perhaps both of them, he would contrive by some means to possess himself of them, so that they could not be produced as witnesses against him. But the resolution was scarcely formed before he began to waver in his purpose, and while he stood thus undecided, Joseph Brooks passed on and was soon lost to sight.

Ten minutes afterward, some one knocked at Mr. Wingrove's door. Looking pale and sad, he went to the door himself.

"Walk in, Joseph," said he.

"Can I see you alone, a few minutes?" inquired the boy.

"Certainly. Has anything new taken place? You tremble, and seem excited."

"Nothing, only I've found something, which I wish to show you."

"Come with me into my study. We sha'n't be interrupted there."

They entered the study, and the pastor closed the door. In about fifteen minutes it was opened, and as Joseph Brooks passed out, the pastor said:

"Say nothing about it to any one—not even your father."

He promised obedience and after he was gone, Mrs. Wingrove observed that her husband's face was less clouded and melancholy.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE YOUNG ARTIST.

After the first terrible agony, which perilled even the life of Matty Hunsdon, she was for the most part patient and uncomplaining; yet without seeing her pale, wan face, or marking her languid air and feeble gait, one might have known, by the melancholy, almost wailing cadence of her voice, which, heretofore, had been like the music of laughing waters, that tears were in her heart. There were times, however, when the great sorrow would have way—when the anguish of the wrung heart would break forth in those wild, passionate tears, which, instead of cooling, heightened the fever of the burning brow.

"O, Aunt Margaret," said Elvie, one day after witnessing one of those bursts of grief, "how could I think that my sorrow, when I received that letter from Herbert, was so hard to bear? It was nothing."

"Poor Matty!" said Aunt Margaret, "she had never learned to be self relying, and now, to have the strong and willing arm withdrawn, on which she could always lean, is very hard. Were it not for her unfaltering faith in John's innocence, I believe it would kill her. Wont she come down and sit with us? She ought not to stay up chamber alone."

"I will go and try to persuade her to come down."

Soon after Elvie had left the room, the pastor came in. Having spoken of Matty Hunsdon, he inquired for Elvie.

"She is pale and sad, though calm," replied Aunt Margaret; "and never falters in the performance of any duty."

"She appears to me to have grown stronger beneath the burthen of this new and fearful affliction."

"She has—every one remarks it. She drooped beneath her old sorrow. It was her first, and somehow, it appeared to me sometimes, that I could almost see it crushing the flowers that bloomed in her heart. You know what I allude to, Mr. Wingrove?"

"Yes."

"Now one would think that the old and the new are both forgotten. Yet it is not so. She only rises above them, that she may the better soothe and sustain her mother. I never, in any one, saw such utter self abandonment."

"It is ever thus with more generous natures."

The pastor sat silent a few minutes, and then said:

"I have called in consequence of a letter I received last evening from Herbert Beverly, in which he expresses a wish, that a young lawyer, by the name of Edward Stafford, should be engaged as counsel for Mr. Hunsdon."

"'Squire Alden has been spoken to, has he not?"

"Yes, but he wishes to have some one associated with him, and Herbert seems so very earnest about this Mr. Stafford."

"And you?"

"I believe I feel nearly as earnest as Herbert does."

"I wish he might be obtained then, but where is the pay to come from, Mr. Wingrove? John is clear of debt, but has little besides his farm. I have already decided to raise by mortgage, what money I can on my little place, and it will go free as so much water. It wont be much, and I find it will barely be sufficient to meet those unavoidable expenses which can now be foreseen. John wont consent to have his farm mortgaged. He says that coming at the truth is what will save him, and not the eloquence of lawyers. He will not be willing to sacrifice the home obtained by honest industry, and which is all he will have to leave to his wife and Elvie, for the sake of obtaining additional counsel to that which will be appointed, when he thinks it will be of no avail."

"There will be no need of it. Herbert says that he shall claim the privilege of defraying the expense incurred by the proposed arrangement."

"Is he not dependent on his father?"

"He has means of his own, sufficient for that purpose. The truth, which I agree with Mr. Hunsdon in thinking is that which can alone save him, is what Herbert thinks this Mr. Stafford, according to what he has heard, is eminently qualified to search out."

"He must be had then. If he couldn't be obtained without, I would cheerfully sell, instead of mortgaging my place."

"I don't doubt you in the least. Well, I will speak to 'Squire Alden, who has already been given to understand that he will be appointed counsel for Mr. Hunsdon, and as I am certain that he will not object, I can see no reason why my answer to Herbert shouldn't be favorable. But before I go, I will mention that Herbert says he has seen a woman, who professes to know who Elvie's parents were, though she could not then be prevailed upon to tell. The most that she would say was, that they were people of high standing in society."

"Is it best to tell this to Elvie?"

"I think not, for as Herbert suggests that the woman may possibly be an impostor, it might raise hopes which would only end in disappointment."

* * * * *

Valmont, after a long and fruitless search for the articles he had lost, was for some time in a state of most painful uncertainty, as to whether it would be advisable for him to remain where he was, or to leave the place, after first giving out that he intended to go in a contrary direction from that which he meant to take. When, however, after the expiration of a week or more, he could not perceive that he was regarded with suspicion, he concluded that whatever Joseph Brooks had found near the scene of crime, at the time he himself was stealing so cautiously to the spot, it could have been nothing of importance. He therefore concluded, that for the present, he would venture to remain, as otherwise there would be no chance for effecting his purpose as regarded Elvie. He continued to board at Mr. Wait's hotel, though he had given up his old room and taken a smaller one below stairs, alleging as a reason, that it was warmer and more comfortable for the winter season, than the one he had occupied.

No notice appeared to be taken of this, though the woman who found him standing by the body of Harder, and who observed his strange appearance, said afterward, that she could not help having her thoughts.

Decker went away almost immediately, though an epistulary correspondence was kept up between him and Valmont.

A number of weeks went on in this way, when one day a young man, so plainly clad as to indicate that he was not one of fortune's favorites, arrived in the stagecoach, at Mr. Wait's hotel. There was nothing in his appearance, which would be likely to attract the attention of an ordinary observer, or to distinguish him from any other common-place young man, as he sat at the supper table with several others, among whom was Valmont, addressing himself to the well cooked viands with a devotion which a long drive in the keen wintry air seldom fails to inspire.

His features were irregular, and not one of them handsome, with the exception, perhaps, of his eyes, the exact color of which, it was not easy to determine.

While the others at the table seemed disposed to be merry and talkative, he sat grave and silent, apparently uninterested in what was said. After awhile, a man who sat next to him, addressed him rather abruptly.

"I think," said he, "I heard you say that you are a portrait painter?"

"Very likely, sir," was his reply.

"And do you follow it for a living?" continued his questioner, with what has been termed Yankee inquisitiveness, though by the way, he was not a native of Yankeedom.

"I do," said the young man, "when I find nothing better to attend to."

"And do you mean to stop here, and try your luck?"

"Yes, a few days, if I meet with encouragement."

"I, for one, should think it a poor place for a portrait painter. Farmers, in a general way, haven't the wherewithal to pay for having such things done. What do you think, Mr. Wait—will there be any chance for him here?"

"Well, I shouldn't wonder if there was, Mr. Carwick," said the landlord. "My wife was saying only a few days since, that she should like to have our little Nellie's likeness taken."

"And she's in the right of it," said Mr. Carwick. "I would have mine painted if I could stop long enough, just to encourage the young man, for somehow, I kind o' like him. I've got a little acquainted with him, and it appears to me, that he is one of those young men who should be encouraged, and I should take it as a kind of personal favor, if you would give him something to do in his line, and persuade others to do the same."

"I will see what I can do for him," replied Mr. Wait.

The thanks of the young artist, in a modest and appropriate manner, were rendered to them both, and the subject being dropped, conversation again became general.

Soon after supper, the young man sought an opportunity to speak aside to the landlord.

"Can I," said he, "have half an hour's private conversation with you, after all have retired?"

"Yes, but that wont be till late."

"How late?"

"Nearly midnight—perhaps quite."

"Where can I see you?"

"In the bar-room, if you please."

"I should prefer some place more secluded."

"Let it be in your room then."

"I must have a room then, where we sha'n't be overheard."

"It shall be. There is one that will just suit you. Mr. Valmont, a gentleman who boards here, used to have it, but this winter he prefers one below stairs."

"Be so good as to have a fire kindled, so that I can go to it when I please. I will leave the door unfastened, and whenever you are ready, you can enter without the ceremony of knocking, which might attract attention. I shall be ready for you at any moment."

Mr. Wait promised to comply with his request, and the young artist entering the bar-room, took a seat near the fire, round which Mr. Carwick and several others were talking politics, or discussing some other favorite topic.

From time to time, a single teamster, or more frequently several who travelled in company, arrived, so that by nine o'clock, there were a dozen or more added to the circle round the fire. The artist gradually threw off his reserve, and chatted freely with the rest; but if he possessed any of the Promethean fire of genius, which on the most unpromising themes will occasionally flash forth, he must have carefully suppressed it, for his remarks were in no respect superior to those which any young man, with a common school education, would have been likely to make.

Valmont occasionally entered the room, and for a few moments hovered near the outer edge of the circle; but for the most part, he kept in the large, cheerful kitchen, where Peggy lightened her labor with snatches of song. Of late, though there was always a fire in his room, he avoided staying alone. The artist appeared to take no notice of his presence at these times, though his handsome dress, as well as handsome person, attracted considerable attention.

As the hour of ten drew near, the company began to disperse, each one seeking his place of repose, till not more than four or five were left. Those drew up nearer the fire, and commenced relating adventures of pioneer life, in which they or some one with whom they were personally acquainted shared a part. The young artist remained and listened an hour or more, when he likewise withdrew.

He found a good fire burning in the room which had been prepared for him, and everything wore the aspect of cheerfulness and comfort. In one of the corners of the room, most remote from the fireplace, he noticed a large arm-chair, in which lay several articles of man's apparel neatly folded, while thrown across the back was a thick, brown overcoat. By the side of the chair was a trunk, on the cover of which were the initials J. H. His own luggage, consisting of a trunk and a rather bulky roll of canvass, was bestowed in a different part of the chamber.

The minutes passed slowly, for a newspaper which he had borrowed of Mr. Wait, and which was of so early a date that the news had become stale, with the exception of his own thoughts, was his only source of amusement. It was near twelve, when his door was softly opened, and Mr. Wait entered.

"Were you not almost tired of waiting?" said he, as he took the chair which the young man had placed for him near his own.

"I didn't expect you sooner," was the reply.

"A few of those old teamsters," said the landlord, "make a point of sitting till late. If they get off by twelve, I think they do very well."

"I believe you are acquainted with a young man by the name of Herbert Beverly?" said the artist.

"I am, and a fine fellow he is, too."

"This is from him, as you will see," and he handed Mr. Wait an unsealed letter, the contents of which were as follows:

"Believing you to be a friend to Mr. Hunsdon, I earnestly request that you will answer all questions relative to the unhappy affair for which he is now in prison, which Edward Stafford, the bearer of this, may think it necessary to ask. Mr. Stafford is a lawyer, and will be associated with Mr. Alden, as counsel for Mr. Hunsdon, at the time of his trial, though at present, for reasons which he will make known to you, he does not wish to appear at Hazlehurst in his real character."

"You are a lawyer, it seems, and not a portrait painter," said Mr. Wait, when he had finished reading the letter.

"Yes, but as I've tried my hand at portraits and other pictures, by way of amusement, I thought, as I didn't wish to be known here as a lawyer, while endeavoring to make certain investigations, that I might as well appear in the character of a travelling artist. Have you any objection to complying with Herbert Beverly's request?"

"None in the world, but I'm afraid that I can tell you little which will be favorable to Mr. Hunsdon."

"I presume Mr. Beverly was not mistaken, in supposing you to be a friend to the prisoner?"

"No, indeed. Nothing could give me more pleasure and satisfaction, than to be able to give you any information which can be turned to his favor."

"John Harder—that was the name of the man who was murdered, I believe?"

"Yes."

"Were there no papers found, which would show where he belonged, or his object in coming to this place?"

"None, whatever; though he said soon after he arrived, that he belonged to the South."

"Did he mention what State?"

"He didn't."

"He inquired for John Hunsdon?"

"He did, and seemed very earnest to see him. The general opinion is, that Mr. Hunsdon was owing him a large sum of money."

"Which tempted him to commit the crime?"

"That is what is thought."

"No papers were found of any description?"

"Yes, there were several found in an old pocket-book, but none that could be made anything of."

"They were not destroyed, I hope?"

"No, after being examined, they were returned to the pocket-book, and are there now."

"In whose care are they?"

"Mine. They are in that trunk, you see in the corner of the room."

"I should like to see them."

Mr. Wait with a key he took from his pocket, unlocked the trunk, and took thence a large pocket-book, such as was in general use, at the beginning of the nineteenth century. It appeared to have been originally of red morocco, though now so much worn and discolored, as to make it difficult to determine.

A slight examination of the papers it contained seemed to favor Mr. Wait's assertion, that there were none which could be made anything of, with a single exception. This was a letter superscribed, "Mr. John Harder, New Orleans," and run thus:

"Your demands are unreasonable. Five hundred dollars annually is all that I will give you. I am not afraid of your threats—their only effect will be to cause me to diminish instead of increasing your stipend. I will see you in the course of a few weeks, when I will give you a written agreement to pay you the above-mentioned sum."

This was signed James Villars; but being without date, and the post-mark being illegible, it gave no clue to the whereabouts of the writer.

"If this James Villars had been in the neighborhood at the time, I should much sooner suspect him to be the murderer, than John Hunsdon," said Stafford, after he had finished reading the letter. "He had a motive, it seems, while Mr. Hunsdon is only suspected of having one. If he could only be found."

"Harder asked if there was a man here by the name of Villars, before he inquired for Mr. Hunsdon."

"Then he expected to find him here!" said Stafford, a sudden light flashing over his countenance.

"Yes, that is what he said."

"No one by that name had ever been here?"

"No, nor since then."

"Harder must have had the agreement referred to in the letter with him. He would not have been so careless, as to leave that behind."

"I should think not."

"And if he did have it with him, it can and must be found."

"A thorough search has been made, and not a scrap of paper could be discovered, except those which are now before you, which, as I've already said, were thought to be of no consequence."

Stafford, who had the pocket book in his hand, had during these remarks, kept turning it in every direction, and holding it closely to the light.

"The search is a hopeless one, I believe," said he, with a look of disappointment.

The words had hardly escaped his lips, when there was a quick kindling of his eyes, as if in their dark depths, some latent spark had become suddenly ignited.

"Do you think you have found the paper?" said Mr. Wait, who had been attentively regarding him.

"There's a paper of some description, beneath the lining of the pocket book cover," said he. "The edge of the lining didn't adhere very closely, which attracted my attention;" and with fingers trembling with eagerness, he drew forth a piece of paper, which being thin, though it was doubled once, did not very perceptibly add to the thickness of the cover. Unfolding it, his eye ran quickly over what it contained, and then, with a smile of exultation, he handed it to Mr. Wait.

"Read," said he.

"It is a most singular document," said he, as after perusing it, he returned it to Stafford.

"It is, and as I believe, a valuable one; for besides showing that this Harder, in consideration of five hundred dollars paid to him annually by James Villars for keeping some secret, the disclosure of which, it seems, would do more than endanger the reputation of Villars, we find that at the time the bond was given, both parties were considered residents of the city of New Orleans."

There was now a silence on both sides, for several minutes, which was broken by Stafford.

"There was a man at the table to-night, by the name of Valmont?" said he.

"There was—he boards here."

"And did, at the time of the murder?"

"Yes."

"Did Harder see him?"

"No, he was at the village when Harder arrived, and didn't return till the next morning."

"It is supposed that he was at the village all night?"

"Yes, he staid at Simpson's."

"Two or three more questions, and for the present, I will trouble you no more."

"Ask as many as you please, sir. I am quite ready to answer them in the best way I can."

"At what hour did the murder take place?"

"At midnight. The village clock, which could be heard as plainly that night as if it had been only a few rods distant, had hardly ceased striking, when a cry, such as I hope never to hear again, startled the whole neighborhood."

"I have heard it intimated that the clock at the village, which was heard so plainly, and the timepieces in this neighborhood, don't generally agree."

"I believe they don't."

"Has not this Mr. Hundson an adopted daughter?"

"He has."

"I believe there is nothing more which I wish to ask you to-night. The information I've obtained I hope to turn to such good account, that it will open a way to prove John Hunsdon's innocence."

"If it can be proved, and through your means, the whole neighborhood will look on you as a benefactor."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

PRICE OF OLD ALDERMEN.

A good thing is going the rounds about one of our new aldermen, which is related in this wise: The grand jury summoned Ald. —— before them, for the purpose of asking him some questions. He came before them, and the following conversation ocurred:

"Ald. ——, has any one ever offered you any money in the shape of a bribe, since your election?"

"Yes, sir."

"Who was it?" said one of the grand jury.

"Mr. ——."

"How much did he offer you?" inquired one of the other jurors.

"Twenty-five dollars," responded the alderman, with a curl of his lip.

"Did you take it?" said the foreman.

(Emphatically)—"No, sir!"

Mr. ——, the briber, was sent for.

"Mr. ——, did you offer Ald. —— twenty-five dollars as a bribe for voting so and so?"

"Yes, sir."

"Did he take it?"

"No, sir."

"Why didn't he take it?" said one of the jurors, much surprised.

"Well, he said that he couldn't sell himself for twenty-five dollars, *as that was the price of old aldermen—the new ones range higher!*"—*New York Despatch.*

MRS. PARTINGTON.

"How is your patience, doctor?" said Mrs. Partington, pushing up the window and thrusting out her head as Dr. Bolus rode by. It was at the time when the venerable Aims was just recovering from a protracted bilious attack, during which he had been so sick that his friend, the President of the Perpetual Life Insurance Company, had told his friends in confidence that he wouldn't insure Aims's life for fifty per cent. The doctor reined up, with a gentle "woa," and replied that his patient was convalescent. The good old lady held up her hands. "I declare," said she, with an expression of pity on her countenance that might have served as the original stock of three modern philanthropists, "I declare I am sorry for it; but I dare say you can cure any body of convalescence if any body can." The doctor construed the remark into an ironical reflection on his practice, and rode away rather petulantly and didn't look at the house for three days thereafter when he rode by.—*Eve. Gazette.*

A LUCKY BARBER.

Richard Arkwright, passed the earlier part of his life in the humble occupation of a barber—but he was fond of reading, and what proved of more value to him, he had early acquired habits of reflection. He conceived the idea of spinning cotton by means of machinery, and notwithstanding he was miserably poor and friendless, notwithstanding he was everywhere ridiculed as a visionary projector, who deserved a cell in a madhouse, by the force of energy and application he succeeded in carrying his design (which has proved so beneficial to the human race) into effect—and afterwards revelled in all the luxuries of wealth, and was knighted by his sovereign.—*Portfolio.*

[Written for The Flag of our U

"LOVE'S FIRST KIS

BY PELHAM

O what is there to life more swe
Than love's first kiss—
The chaste, pure feeling of a soul
O enfolded with bliss.

The language of the heart more p
Than tongue can speak—
Which coming from the heart, s
Would make bad weak.

The emblem of a tie that binds
Two souls as one—
The harbinger of joy that lasts
Till life has gone.

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MR. JOHN GRAHAM, BAC

BY FRANCES A. SHAW

"How pleasant and cozy it is h
ing! No wife to wear me wit
prattle, or vex me with her perpetu
whining; no children to raise up Be
me, and be the plague of my life. G
indeed! Let the world decide our
as it will, it is all envy. We are th
earth. Talk of our lonely and dis
it's wasting breath. Pity us? Foll
bestow their compassion where
Who's happier than I?—I'd like
And John Graham gazed with an a
satisfaction around his quiet, elegant

For a bachelor's abode, it was ind
fully pleasant and cheerful. A brig
fire glowed in the grate, sheddi
warmth through the apartment. I
was constitutionally somewhat of a
was his favorite pastime to watch
strange shapes which the glowing co
assume, in their transition state to
ashes, where, alas! many of our fo
dreams are prone to end.

Reader mine, are you a dreame
commend you to a bright, glowing
been the inspiration of my own m
dreams. Did you never trace in th
embers grand palaces, gray old abb
ulchral cloisters, and did your fanc
ple them with forms to please itself
ance, the scene will change. The
ace, the gray old castle, will fade int
thatched cottage; the noble lord, th
dame will evanish, and in their place
lowly lad and lassie. But they are
love can transform the thatched roof
ace; it can make the lowliest but a
gate of heaven. Commend me, in
the fleecy, ever-changing clouds, on
ewy scroll many a mystic poem a
mance is written; but in winter, ei
ters, draw the easy-chair before the
detest sir tights), and let me yield
delicious reverie.

This little word "*I*" is becomi
and must be dropped; only let m
passing, that in this respect, Mr. J
and my humble self are kindred s
content with the actual around hum
prone to make forays into the ma
ination, and commune with be
this stale matter-of-fact world, and
through scenes which have not their
sober mundane sphere. To such fol
I too must plead guilty.

John Graham is a man of fortune
He can dream from morning till ni
liketh him; while *I*, poor damsel!
turn my heart inside out, and tell to
ing world fancies which I would fain
own breast, glad to receive as an eq
a tithe of that gold of which my he
felt the need.

Yes, John Graham sat in his velv
easy chair, before a glowing fire, loo
A volume rich in traditions of the
had fallen at his side, and he was
those fairy realms of childhood, whi
flaked for ladies' eyes, when mail-
dared the battle's fiercest fray to win

But turreted castle and "faire lad
ing from her lattice for her true kni
cloistered cell, where cowled monk
vestal counted their beads and be
paternosters; chapel, in whose va
ashes of the noble dead, and from
madonnas and saints looked down u
their shrine-like all, all had vanishe
sir. Ah me, that such is the stuff
are made of!

But a heap of ashes remained in t
shadows of evening were gathering
and Mr. Graham awoke. The ideal
merged into the actual. The room
dark and cold, and its master, rif
fuel and lights, which were speedily
The ruddy coal-fire was placed upo
table, the fire was rekindled, and t
assumed its most cheerful aspect
Graham, gazing complacently arou
utterance to the exclamations wit
commenced this veritable history.

It was a snug, elegant home, that
situated in one of the most desira
of our nation's metropolis. But o
wanting to complete the perfection of
its arrangements. This he very w
he gave no such thought utterance—
endeavored to persuade himself that
the very acme of human felicity, a
introduction of a wife into his domi
the same drawback to his happiness
skeleton in the houses of the ancien
That ghastly shape of death was ever
the social hearth and festive board
the pleasure-loving inmates of the
dwellings that they were mortal; and
presence of a Mrs. Graham by h
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Which, coming from the heart, mere words
Would make but weak.

The emblem of a tie that binds
Two souls as one—
The harbinger of joy that lasts
Till life has gone.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

MR. JOHN GRAHAM, BACHELOR.

BY FRANCES A. SHAW.

"How pleasant and cozy it is here, this evening! No wife to weary me with her insipid prattle, or vex me with her perpetual teasing and whining; no children to raise up Bedlam around me, and be the plague of my life. Old bachelors, indeed! Let the world deride our single estate as it will, it is all envy. We are the salt of the earth. Talk of our lonely and disconsolate lot! it's wasting breath. Pity us! Folks had better bestow their compassion where it is needed. Who's happier than I?—I'd like to know." And John Graham gazed with an air of supreme satisfaction around his quiet, elegant parlor.

For a bachelor's abode, it was indeed wonderfully pleasant and cheerful. A bright anthracite fire glowed in the grate, shedding its genial warmth through the apartment. Mr. Graham was constitutionally somewhat of a dreamer. It was his favorite pastime to watch the weird, strange shapes which the glowing embers would assume, in their transition-state to smoke and ashes, where, alas! many of our fondest earthly dreams are prone to end.

Reader mine, are you a dreamer? Let me commend you to a bright, glowing fire. It has been the inspiration of my own most cherished dreams. Did you never trace in the dissolving embers grand palaces, gray old abbeys and sepulchral cloisters, and did your fancy never people them with forms to please itself? Ever and anon, the scene will change. The stately palace, the gray old castle, will fade into the simple thatched cottage; the noble lord, the high-born dame will evanish, and in their places we see the lowly lad and lassie. But they are lovers, and love can transform the thatched roof into a palace; it can make the lowliest hut seem the very gate of heaven. Commend me, in summer, to the fleecy, ever-changing clouds, on whose shadowy scroll many a mystic poem and wild romance is written; but in winter, close the shutters, draw the easy-chair before the open fire (I detest air tights), and let me yield myself to a delicious reverie.

This little word "*I*" is becoming intrusive, and must be dropped; only let me remark, in passing, that in this respect, Mr. John Graham and my humble self are kindred spirits. Not content with the actual around him, he is sadly prone to make forays into the misty realm of imagination, and commune with beings not of this stale matter-of-fact world, and to wander through scenes which have not their home in the sober mundane sphere. To such follies as these, *I* too must plead guilty.

John Graham is a man of fortune and leisure. *He* can dream from morning till night, if so it liketh him; while *I*, poor damsel! must needs turn my heart inside out, and tell to the gossiping world fancies which I would fain keep in my own breast, glad to receive as an equivalent but a tithe of that gold of which my hero has never felt the need.

Yes, John Graham sat in his velvet cushioned easy chair, before a glowing fire, lost in reverie. A volume rich in traditions of the olden time had fallen at his side, and he was dreaming of those days of chivalry when kingdoms were staked for ladies' eyes, when mail-clad knights dared the battle's fiercest fray to win their smile.

But turreted castle and "faire ladye" watching from her lattice for her true knight's return; cloistered cell, where cowled monk and veiled vestal counted their beads and breathed their *paternosters*; chapel, in whose vaults lay the ashes of the noble dead, and from whose walls madonnas and saints looked down as if to guard their slumbers—all, all had vanished into thin air. Ah me, that such is the stuff our dreams are made of!

But a heap of ashes remained in the grate, the shadows of evening were gathering around him, and Mr. Graham awoke. The ideal had become merged into the actual. The room was growing dark and cold, and its master, rising, rang for fuel and lights, which were speedily forthcoming. The richly cut astral was placed upon the centre-table, the fire was rekindled, and the room had assumed its most cheerful aspect, when Mr. Graham, gazing complacently around him, gave utterance to the exclamations with which we commenced this veritable history.

It was a snug, elegant home, that of our hero, situated in one of the most desirable localities of our nation's metropolis. But one item was wanting to complete the perfection of his domestic arrangements. This he very well knew; yet he gave no such thought utterance—not he! He endeavored to persuade himself that he was at the very acme of human felicity, and that the introduction of a wife into his domicil would be the same drawback to his happiness, as was the skeleton in the houses of the ancient Egyptians. That ghastly shape of death was ever present, at the social hearth and festive board, reminding the pleasure loving inmates of those gorgeous dwellings that they were mortal; and the constant presence of a Mrs. Graham by her liege lord and master's side, would have reminded that gentleman that *he*, also, was mortal, and, like weak and fallible men in general, had yielded up his bachelor liberty and happiness.

You would have read, at a glance, wealth and refined taste in the surroundings of Mr. Graham. Costly pictures, in gorgeous frames, adorned the walls of the room into which we have introduced you, kind reader. There were among them some of the choicest productions of the old masters (Mr. Graham had travelled in Europe), and also a *few chef d œuvres* of our own artists, for Mr. Graham was patriotic, and always encouraged genius at home. In a recess, partially concealed by a rich crimson drapery, were shelves filled to repletion with books upon whose gilded bindings you might have read the names most venerated in the literature of our own time, as well as those of the great bards and sages of the past. These were not kept for idle show, for their owner was a gentleman of ripe scholarship and decided literary taste. Curtains of the richest lace and velvet draped the windows, concealing the fearful storm that was raging without. We need not descant farther upon the evidences of ease and elegance spread with such a lavish hand around our bachelor; suffice it to say, that in his mansion was all that luxury could sigh for, or unbounded wealth procure.

He drew his arm-chair to a table littered with the late magazines and dailies, which he honored with but a cursory glance, few of their articles being suited to his fastidious taste. Near the fire was drawn up a small table, covered with a snowy cloth, upon which was placed a spotless tea service of china and silver. A slow, cautious step approached; the door opened, and an old lady entered, followed by a servant bearing the tea tray. The lady seated herself at the head of the table, the gentleman at the foot.

While the twain are taking tea, let us introduce you to Miss Hannah Graham, Mr. John's maiden aunt and housekeeper. A model housekeeper is this Aunt Hannah, and during the twenty years she has occupied that post in her nephew's establishment, he has never had cause to complain of buttonless shirts, undarned stockings, untidy rooms, cold tea, muddy coffee, or any of those thousand-and-one ills which bachelor flesh is heir to, which, we regret to say, few husbands escape.

In Aunt Hannah's eyes, "my nephew" was perfection itself, and she deemed a life devoted to his comfort and happiness, the highest glory to which a woman might aspire. Tea-time passed stiffly and unsociably, as usual. Aunt Hannah could talk only of household affairs and the weather, and those topics having been for the third time that day duly discussed, a dreary pause ensued. Her nephew having at length arisen from the table, the spinster rang the bell, and the servant came and removed the tea-things, as usual. Then having received a "no, I thank you" to the stereotyped inquiry, which in twenty years had not been once omitted—was anything requisite for her nephew's comfort? could she be of any further service to him?—Aunt Hannah bade her usual deferential "good night," and retired to her chamber.

Mr. Graham being left to his own reflections, relapsed again into a reverie. The train of his reflections ran somewhat in this wise:

"Yes, thank Heaven, that I am a bachelor! May it give me grace to remain so to the end of the chapter. Many a plot has been laid against my single blessedness, many a matrimonial snare has been set for me, but fortunate man that I am, I have escaped them all!

"'Tisn't myself that managing mamas and pretty daughters are seeking so perseveringly. No, I haven't the vanity to think that, though I don't consider myself by any means ill looking;" and our hero cast quite a satisfied glance into a full-length mirror opposite, which certainly reflected as handsome and noble a countenance, and as fine a figure as one would wish to see.

"Ah, it's my money, the dear artless creatures are sighing for! With that alone, were I possessed of no other recommendation, I could win the best of them, I dare say.

'Gold is the woman's only theme,
Gold is the woman's only dream.'

says Moore, and he merely echoes Byron's opinion:

'Woman, like moths, are only caught by glare,
And Mammon wins his way, where scruples might despair.'

That's true as gospel, every word of it. Now while appealing to the poets for support of my own long-established opinions, I am more forcibly than ever reminded of the truth of the words of that old bard, who wrote years and years before my grandfather was born:

'O take, if you would measure well the worth of woman's mind,
A scale made of the spider's web, and weights made of the wind.'

As it was in the beginning with the sex, so it is now—ay, and ever shall be! How a sensible man can bind himself for life to one of these frivolous beings, is more than I can understand.

"But I have known one true woman. Let me not defame my mother! There was another, too, whom I once deemed perfection. Had Florence Ingraham smiled upon my suit, I might have met the fate of Benedick after all. It was a lucky thing for me that she refused me. I will set that down as a mere boyish infatuation, the only folly I was ever guilty of in that line. And yet *loyish* is hardly the word, for when we first met, I was a man turned twenty-five, and she a mere child of fifteen. Yet even then her heart was in another's keeping, and could not be mine. They say that she married wretchedly. I wonder where she is to-night? But what is that to me? Just nothing at all. Vive le single blessedness! It *is* lonely here, though! I wish Aunt Hannah wasn't quite so much of an automaton. I wish Smith would drop in, just to relieve the monotony. That Smith's a glorious fellow! heart free and happy like myself—"

At this stage of our bachelor's reverie, the door-bell rang, announcing a visitor who did not prove to be Smith. Who it was, we will tell you presently.

"An' faith an' is it the likes of ye that's a pokin' yerself here into me masther's front door? Get along into the kitchen, and it's meself that'll be afther seein' what ye want. I'll not bother the gentleman wid ye. Here I've toted up two flights of stairs, jist to shut the door in yer face. Come round to the servant's door, as ye ought to, and I'll let ye in."

"O please let me come in now, I am so cold; besides, I must see your master or mistress, to get the pay for this work. Please do let me in now; I can't wait."

This was the colloquy which disturbed the train of Mr. Graham's thoughts, in which he recognized the coarse Irish brogue of his serving woman Margaret, and the soft pleading tones of a child. He was a generous, kind hearted man. The destitute never left his door unblessed, the suffering unrelieved. He stepped at once into the hall, and said:

"Come into my parlor, little girl, and warm yourself."

The child needed no second bidding. She was a pale, fragile creature, apparently some ten years of age, and seemed almost benumbed with cold. John Graham took her tenderly in his arms, and placing her in the chair he had just vacated, he drew it up to the fire with its tiny burden. He then proceeded to remove the old hood and thin, faded shawl, which with a tattered calico frock had been her chief protection against that pitiless storm. Her clothes were covered with sleet, the little feet protruded from the worn shoes, and the unmittened hands were nearly frozen.

"Poor little thing!" said the sympathizing bachelor, as taking the child upon his knee, he held the benumbed feet to the fire and chafed the little blue hands in his own warm, white palm. "Poor child!" he repeated; and as Margaret stood at a respectful distance gazing upon the scene, and wondering at her fastidious master's condescension, he said: "Margaret, bring me some warm blankets to wrap around this child, and call Miss Graham, I fear she is very ill. Why, Margaret, if I had not overheard your conversation, you would have driven her from the door, and she might have perished."

"An' wouldn't I have my hands full, yer honor, to be afther takin' in all the low trash like her, that's comin' here every day? I'd have risked her dying—these folks have as many lives as a cat; 'taint quite so easy killin' 'em."

A look of displeasure from her master checked Miss Margaret's loquacity, and she left the room to execute his commands.

Aunt Hannah soon made her appearance. She gave the child a reviving draught, which soon awoke her from the partial stupor into which she had fallen. She opened her eyes, and gazed intently into Mr. Graham's face, and in those pale, wasted features, he read unmistakable signs of starvation.

"Have you had any supper to-night, my dear?" he asked, in his kindest tones.

"No, sir," replied the little girl, her transparent cheek becoming crimson, and tears starting to her eyes. "I haven't tasted a mouthful for two days. Mother hasn't neither, and that is the reason why I came out on such a night as this, to get the money for that work."

"What work, my child?"

"Why, the shirts mother's been making for you. To morrow is the Sabbath, and we knew we couldn't get it then. O please do pay it to me now, and let me go home. Mother is *so* sick. She had to sit up in bed, and finish the work."

"I knew nothing about the work. Aunt Hannah was getting it done for me, I suppose. What a dear, kind soul she is, never to trouble me about such matters," soliloquized Mr. Graham. "She has just stepped out to bring you some supper. I'll ask her about it when she returns."

"Please, sir, I oughtn't to wait for any supper—wont you pay me the money now, and let me go? There were just six of them. Mother's at home all alone in the dark and cold. Besides, she'll be frightened about me."

"*Pay* you, poor child? Indeed I will; but I'm not going to trust you out alone, on such a dark night as this. I'll not send a servant with you, either—I'll go myself. Now, while I am getting ready, just be eating some of the food that Miss Graham has brought you."

Mr. Graham was a long time making his preparations to go out—a much longer time than was necessary, for, as he occasionally glanced at the child, he could not fail to notice the eagerness with which she partook of the food Miss Graham had set before her.

He scrutinized her narrowly, and saw that she was an unusually lovely child. The delicacy of her form, and the refined expression of her features, told that she did not belong to the vulgar herd which a great city usually recognizes as its wretchedly poor. Those long silken curls, the expression of those large hazel eyes, the contour of those finely-chiselled features, strangely reminded him of a fair image which had for years been imprinted upon the tablet of his memory, and whose outlines time and change had not erased.

"It is a mere fancy," he sighed. "Why is it, that always when I see a face strikingly beautiful, I compare it with hers, and never fail to trace some resemblance to those sweet features which will haunt my memory till I die? Ah! crusty bachelor that I am, cynic though I may become, I must admit that Florence Ingraham was my destiny—my life's one love. It was a strange infatuation! Alas, that there could be only one in the wide, wide world like her!

"Now we are ready, little one," he said, when having muffled the child in the hood and shawl which Aunt Hannah had brought, he took her hand in his, and they sallied forth.

It was a bitter night, and Mr. Graham, strong, robust man as he was, shrank back, as upon opening the door a gust of wind drove the chilling sleet full in his face. Yet he was not one to be deterred from an earnest purpose, and sheltering the little girl beneath the ample folds of his cloak, they walked on.

"What is your name, my child?" inquired Mr. Graham, after they had proceeded a short distance.

"Florence Selby," she replied.

Florence! Ah, that name still had power to send a thrill through John Graham's heart.

"Florence Selby! and what was your mother's name?" he asked, led on by an impulse he could not control.

"Florence Ingraham," was the reply.

"Florence Ingraham! The same, by heaven! the very same," ejaculated Mr. Graham. "Ah, now I understand the strange interest I took in the child from the first. Florence, darling, let me carry you in my arms," he said, tenderly. "You are too fragile to brave this blustering storm. There, lay your head upon my bosom; we will soon be at your mother's; if you have told me the right street and number, it cannot be far distant."

"I have, I am sure I have, sir, and you'll pay her the money, went you? as soon as we get there, because I want to go out before the shops are closed, and get some bread and fuel for to-morrow."

"Bless your poor little heart! To be sure I'll pay you, and I'll go and get you the food and fuel myself. I'm not going to trust such a little girl as you are out again on such a night as this. Bless me! now I think of it, how much you look like your mother!"

"Have you ever seen my mother? because she don't let anybody that she used to know see her now, if she can help it. She always draws her veil over her face when she meets any of her old acquaintances. I suppose she feels ashamed, because she is so poor. Where did you ever see my mother?"

"No matter now, little Florence, I'll tell you at some other time. But here we are right in her neighborhood. Where does she live? Do any of those lights come from her room?"

"O no, sir. We haven't any candles, nor fire either, to-night; but set me down, and let me take your hand, and I can lead you to our room in the dark."

That was a wretched neighborhood to which little Florence Selby had brought the wealthy Mr. Graham, and before the most wretched of the squalid dwellings there she stopped. Threading their way in the dark through many a narrow passage, and up many a crazy staircase, little Florence at length opened a door, and groping her way to her mother's bedside, whispered:

"Mother, I have come! and such a nice, kind gentleman has come with me! Don't you think, he carried me almost all the way in his arms! and he's going out himself to buy us bread and fuel and lights."

A faint moan was the only answer. Mr. Graham advanced through the darkness to Mrs. Selby's side and pronounced her name, but she made no reply. "Your mother is ill, I fear," he said to Florence. "I will go for lights and assistance." Finding his way into the next tenement, he procured a tallow candle. As it shed its flickering rays round the room, they revealed a scene of destitution such as Mr. Graham, although he had for years made visiting the poor a Christian duty, had never before witnessed. They fell upon the wasted form of the sufferer. It was Florence—his much loved Florence; though years of sorrow had passed over that face, since last they met, he knew her still.

She lay there still and motionless as a statue. Her eyes were closed, their long dark lashes sweeping a cheek Mr. Graham had ever before seen glowing with the rosy hue of health its faint hectic flush now the only visible token that life remained. He bent his ear down—her breath came short and quick; he in vain attempted to arouse her, and then he felt that, exhausted with that last despairing effort she had made for bread, she had sank back on her wretched couch to die.

At length, she seemed partially roused from her lethargy, by the sobs of the little Florence; she opened her eyes, but their wild light spoke of delirium, and they had no glance of recognition for her child. She essayed to speak, but the words were incoherent, and finally died away into a faint moan. John Graham lingered a little time, and then left the room. He despatched a man for a physician, another for fuel, and a bright fire was soon casting its ruddy glow around that cheerless apartment.

"Ah, *you here*, Mr. Graham?" exclaimed Doctor Holden, in great astonishment. "Such scenes as this don't lie exactly in your way. I wish they did not so much in mine. To be called from our cozy fireides, on such a night as this, to visit these poor creatures, isn't very pleasant."

"You are quite mistaken in the character of your patient, Doctor Holden," replied Mr. Graham, "and I must beg that you will give her every attention in your power; there is no time for delay."

The doctor advanced to the bedside. "Why," he said, "there is a fever in this woman's veins which must have been brought on by hard work and slow starvation. If she had any constitution left, she might rally; yet I fear it is too late to save her now."

"I cannot hear it, doctor. There must be hope for her; she *must not* die now. Restore her to health, and name your reward."

Doctor Holden gazed a moment at Mr. Graham in surprise at this unwonted interest, and then said: "Certainly, sir, I shall do my best, and while there is life, there is hope, you know."

"Can't she be removed from this place?"

"She must be, or she can never recover. You see how the storm beats in even now, through these broken windows and the chinks in these old walls. There is little hope for her whether she remains here or not."

"But she shall not die here in this miserable place," said Mr. Graham, in a choked voice.

And that very night, she lay in a downy bed in the very best chamber of his mansion. Aunt Hannah took upon herself the office of nurse. Doctor Holden was unremitting in his attentions, and John Graham's pale countenance and agitated manner told how deep was his interest in the unconscious sufferer.

The crisis came, after many weary days and nights of suffering and of watching. Mrs. Selby had fallen into that deep sleep, from which she would waken to life and health, or which must be to her the sleep of death. Unconscious of everything around her, pale and beautiful as some form of sculptured marble, and to outward seeming almost as lifeless, she lay upon her pillow. Doctor Holden sat at a little table near the bedside, on which a night lamp was burning. Before him lay a watch marking the slowly fleeting hours, which might finish the span of his patient's earthly existence. Aunt Hannah sat by the sleeper's side, and did not remove her eyes for a moment from those corpselike features.

Mr. Graham had retired to an adjoining apartment, and little Florence lay sleeping in his arms. Thus they sat, through the whole of that long night, who's hours seemed interminable. Little Florence had fallen asleep, and just as a few faint streaks of light entering through the blind gave token of approaching dawn, Mr. Graham laid her upon a bed and stole softly to the sick chamber. At that moment, the sufferer opened her eyes; their wild light was gone. Catching that g'ance of returning consciousness, "Thank God for his infinite mercy, which has spared her to us!" he said, and then approaching her side, he gently whispered her name.

She cast a bewildered glance around the elegantly furnished chamber, and then raised her eyes to the face of her former lover.

"Florence! dear Florence, do you know me?" he said.

Pressing her hand to her brow, as if to recall some vanished image, she whispered: "I have had such a long, long dream! I was so destitute, so wretched! It was a dream that seemed to carry me through so many sorrowing, weary years. I was a mother and the child of my love was starving, and I had no bread to give her. I dreamed I had married George Selby—that I had turned in coldness from your love to his! O yes, John Graham, I know you. God bless you!" she murmured faintly, and then exhausted by the effort, sank back into a quiet slumber.

* * * * *

Gradually a knowledge of the exact state of affairs dawned upon Mrs. Selby's mind, and with that knowledge came a deep sense of the debt of gratitude she owed to Mr. Graham.

Some weeks had elapsed. Mrs. Selby had for the first time left her chamber. It was a mild day in spring, and she was sitting in the little back parlor by a window opening into the garden. The balmy air fanned her brow, and the soothing influences of nature spoke peace to her heart. A new life seemed to have entered every vein, and on her cheek she felt the glow of returning health. A soft step approached, and Mr. Graham stood at her side.

"I cannot express to you the pleasure I feel, Mrs. Selby, in seeing you so nearly restored to health," he said.

"Nor can I express the gratitude I feel to you, for your kindness to me and my daughter. We owe our lives to you. Though we can never repay you, God will reward you for it."

"I deserve no reward, Mrs. Selby, and yet you have it in your power to repay me a thousand fold. Florence, dear Florence!—may I not call you so now, since death long years ago severed the tie which bound you to another?—you are now, as you have ever been since our first meeting, dearer to me than my own life. Will you not remain here, and share my fortune and my home?"

"Mr. Graham! You surely cannot be serious? You would not elevate me from that depth of poverty and wretchedness in which you found me, to your own high station in the world. Do not mock me by such words. I have been thinking, as I sat here, that we must not intrude longer upon your kindness. I have acquirements which might be turned to account. Had I friends to assist me in obtaining pupils, I could teach—"

"Never, while I live! Ah, Florence, I have not deserved this distrust. For your sake, I have led a lonely life, through all these years. At our first interview, I loved you. I was a young man then; you were ten years my junior, and—"

"And I," said Mrs. Selby, interrupting him, "a wayward, thoughtless child—an orphan with no friends to counsel me. I flung your manly affection from me, for the affection of a wild, capricious boy. I married him, and how soon did I discover that blind infatuation, not love, had induced me to link my destiny with his. We were young and gay; we sought that happiness in society which we found not in each other. By our extravagance, my husband's patrimony was soon gone, and the large fortune left me by my father, which I had deemed inexhaustible, melted away like a snow-wreath. My husband sought to retrieve his losses at the gaming table; it was in vain. Then to drown his shame and sorrow, he had recourse to the intoxicating bowl. He became a drunkard, and ere our child could lisp his name, he was in his grave. Yet he died penitent, thank God! Since then, I have struggled on in this great and heartless city; my health at length gave way, and I sank into that abyss of poverty in which you found me."

"I know it all. What I did not gather from your own lips during your delirium, I learned from your child. Let us speak no longer of the past, dear Florence! It is a theme too painful. I offer you a love that has stood the test of years, and been tried in the furnace of sorrow. Can you reciprocate it? Will you accept it?"

"I can reciprocate it most fully, and accept it most thankfully. Heaven help me to be worthy of you!"

A year from that evening on which our story opens, a happy trio were seated around the cheerful fire in Mr. John Graham's parlor. Tea was over, and Miss Hannah Graham, as was her wont, had retired early.

"Florence, my love," said Mr. Graham, drawing his wife yet nearer to his side, "one year ago, this night, I was sitting here alone wrapped up in my selfish bachelor reflections. I almost shudder to think what a cynic I was becoming. Why, I should soon have eclipsed even Diogenes in his tub! It was a kind providence that sent me to you that night—was it not, dearest? It is a happy change for me, that the past year has wrought! Say, does the new love atone to you for the loss of the old?"

Mrs. John Graham placed her hand in her husband's, and as she leaned her head upon his shoulder, whispered in his ear:

"That, mother like, in darkness set,
The sweetest tongue life's guiding star.
I did not love thee first, but yet
Thou know'st I love thee better far."

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

"IN CHILDHOOD'S DAYS."

BY BLANCHE D'ARTOIS.

In childhood's days—not long ago—
We wandered by the stream,
Whose beauteous margin in wanton flow
Of floral rainbows gleamed—
And sephyrs gaily glided past,
And heaven hung bright on high.
And childhood's heart beat quick and fast,
And life flew gaily by.

In childhood's days—not long ago—
We often met and raved
Beside the stream with footsteps slow,
But never dreamed we loved:
Those days of joy flew quickly past—
A sigh—a tear—we parted:
Death willed it was our first and last—
I roam now broken-hearted.

In childhood's days—not long ago—
It seemeth like a dream;
I hear the murmuring brooklet flow,
I sit beside the stream:
I press the margo her footsteps trod—
The flowers her hand caressed—
And whisper "I loved one—gone to God!
Thy childhood's dream was blest.'

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

THE SURPRISE.

BY MARY A. LOWELL.

"And you say you are sad, my poor Julie, and want to come for a few days to Linden Place! My dear cousin! did you not feel that you would be most cordially welcome, without even announcing, much less begging, a visit? Come, then, without delay; but leave your sadness on the road. Linden Place is in full glory, and it will not abide shadows. You say your heart weeps, while your face wears a smile! Well, love, you must 'lay your wet heart by the side of your sunshiny face, and the bog will be dried presently.' In truth, I do not blame you, Julie, for being sad in a city, in the glorious time of summer. Why, you lose the better part of life, by being cooped up between bricks and mortar. Come out with me into the glorious old woods, and let dear nature speak to your heart and it will make it all too glad for weeping."

Such was the letter which Julie Bowen received from her lively cousin, Mrs. Linden. It was the first *real* smile that Julie's face had shown for the last six weeks; and yet one could hardly have thought that, situated as she was, she could have been very unhappy. Kind and indulgent parents, affectionate brothers and sisters, a luxurious city home, and all appliances for comfort and elegance, would seem to have been fully sufficient to the happiness of most young ladies. But we all know how little the surroundings of any person of true sensibility can influence her happiness.

Only one year had Julie been initiated into fashionable society; and although she had floated on the topmost wave, far away, in the distant country town where her school-days had always been passed, there was one whose love was dearer to her than all this pomp and show, of which she was so tired. One glance of his large, spiritual eye was better than all the false-hearted compliments which thickened about the beautiful co-heiress of Mr. Bowen, whose wealth was almost fabulous.

But in the charmed circle of fashion, Fletcher Hervey would have been sadly out of place. His were the still and quiet occupations of a scholar; and his home could never be made amongst the frivolities and affectations of city life. He loved Julie Bowen, not for her wealth, for he had not even heard of it; but for her sympathy with his tastes, her fine appreciation of all talent, all genius, and all art that came within the scope of her observation; for her longings after a purer and more spiritual existence; and no less for her tender, womanly heart.

Step by step, through the last half year of Julie's scholar life, their love had progressed, and yet no word had been spoken by either. Fletcher Hervey was poor, and he felt bound to keep aloft from all engagements, until he could see his way clear before him. With the scanty salary of a teacher of languages, how could he expect anything for the future, but the meanest subsistence? But though lips may be mute, there is a language of the eyes not so easily guarded, and long before she was called to her father's princely home, to enter upon the world where she was to make a part of the pageant, she knew that she was dearly and truly loved.

A year went round, and Julie, dissatisfied with herself and every one around her, and longing for some place of quiet seclusion, where the butterflies of fashion would never think of folding their painted wings, wrote to Mrs. Linden, to invite herself to her pleasant home. It was a rare pleasure that she gave to Alice Linden, when she asked to go to her. She loved Julie better than either of her cousins. There was a great contrast between them, for Alice was a lively, impulsive and fanciful woman, while Julia was silent, almost to pensiveness, and with no slight tinge of romance lingering about the depths of her heart. No one could resist the hearty sympathy and unaffected cordiality of Mrs. Linden. She met her visitor at the door, with welcome on her lip and in her eyes, and a voice of such tender sweetness, that Julie's tears sprang to her eyes.

An hour passed with Mr. Linden, showed her that he was worthy of his wife; and before the day had gone by, Julie felt herself perfectly at home. Her friends manifested that rare tact which leaves a visitor to her own pursuits, after providing liberally the means of enjoyment.

The family passed most of the time out of doors, and this freedom charmed Julie's taste, while it improved her health, and exhilarated her spirits. She joined eagerly in every plan which would keep her out of the house; and her friends rallied her upon the taste she exhibited, so different from other town-bred ladies.

"I am not a town-bred lady, Alice," she answered, "nor do I wish to be. My wishes all lie centered in a country life. I could rejoice to have a mere subsistence in the country, and work hard for that."

Alice laughed.

"You would suit a cousin of William's admirably," she said. "He is forever quoting these lines:

'I never formed a hope of happiness,
But in the country was the scene.'

"But do you think, my lady fair, that you could really make butter and cheese, milk the cows, and bake corn-cakes?"

"No doubt of it whatever," said Julie, smiling. "I could do a great deal—sacrifice a great deal for those I loved."

Alice looked her in the face for a few moments without speaking. When she turned away, Julie heard her say, "Tears—low spirits—wants to live in the country—make sacrifices—bad symptoms!" and she shook her head gravely as she uttered each sentence.

"Nay," said Julie, following her, "I am not willing that you should think *that*—"

"*That!* that what?"

"What you were thinking of as you turned away."

"Really, Miss Bowen, I did not know you were a clairvoyant. I shall be afraid to think my own thoughts, now that I know that you are given over to the black art. But I will forgive you if you will 'make a clean breast,' to me, of all *your* thoughts. I know *something* is the matter with your little heart. Confess!"

And Julie, who had never spoken to mortal ears of her love for Fletcher Hervey, unveiled her whole heart to her cousin Alice. Not without many struggles indeed, but frankly and openly, without keeping back a single feeling in connection with it. Indeed, as she had come to her for a cure, it would have been ungrateful not to describe her disorder to so kind and tender a physician.

"I really had designed, cousin Julie," said Alice, "that you should have bestowed your 'hand, heart and fortune,' upon a pet friend of William's. I will not tell you his name, because that would be hardly fair; but I will tell you this much. He is noble, talented, as highly born and highly bred as any of the Bowens (I may say that, since I belong to the family!) and I doubt not, has as tender a heart as your Mr. Hervey. I am expecting him here on a visit, for he always comes on the first of September, to enjoy a week's shooting with William; and if you do not prefer him to your country school-teacher, I will give you over to a depraved taste."

"I defy him!" said Julie, catching some of her cousin's playful spirit.

After this, there were a great many mysterious talks between Mrs. Linden and her husband, and had not Julie thought it perfectly impossible on her cousin's part, she would almost have feared she was betraying her confidence. At any rate, she was confident that she was the subject of their conferences, for twice she had heard her name, just as she was opening the door of the room where they were talking, and moreover, their confusion showed that something was connected with her.

Time passed rapidly, even with Julie. Her sick heart healed under the glorious influences of nature that were everywhere around her. She loved to go out into the grand old woods, and give herself up to a higher inspiration, than even Fletcher's love could give her. Hers was no common, girlish passion, which could vent itself in words—she was no love-lorn maiden, cherishing an idle sentiment and dignifying it with the name of love! No, she was an upright, pure and good woman, who made even the largest need of human love subservient to the worship of the divine.

She believed fully that her life and Fletcher Hervey's must and would remain apart. She believed truly that Mr. Bowen would sooner see her die, than wedded to a poor man; and her recent communing with nature, and with her own heart, and the confession that she had made to her cousin relieving her of her heavy secret, all combined with a full purpose that she had formed, of devoting her life to the duties of her situation, and allowing nothing selfish to mingle therein. It is a very good resolve, Julie! Let us see if you can keep it!

The other members of the Bowen family had returned from their sea-side excursions, to the pleasures of a city life. Broadway was thronged with crowds of gay people who had come from summer tours, to mingle again in show and dissipation. Mamma, whose summer schemes had been rudely blasted. Young lovers, who had failed of securing the heart of the lady of their choice; old men who had left town to lessen their expenses, and had found them wonderfully increased; all met on the same plane of disappointment and vexation, again to form new plans of convenience, of love, or of retrenchment.

Julie was sent for at home, but Mrs. Linden would not hear of it; and her husband who was going to New York on business, promised to make it all right with her father and mother. She was so quiet here that she could not endure the thought of plunging again into the excitement and bustle of the city, and she was thankful when Mr. Linden brought the required permission. The first of September had come and gone; but no signs of Mrs. Linden's expected visitor. She read part of a letter to Julie, which he had written to her in answer to her earnest invitation.

"You ask me to come to you, dear friend, and you hint strongly that there is an attraction there which, you say, will soften even my obdurate heart. How little you know of me, Alice! I could tell you a history of the devotion of that heart, which would put all your preconceived ideas of it to flight at once. But I forbear. Perhaps when I come to you, your womanly sympathy will bring me to confession. Meantime, think anything of me rather than that I am obdurate or insensible. Remember that there is such a thing as unreturned love! I will be with you soon; but when, it will be impossible for me now to say."

"This is vexatious enough," said Mrs. Linden. "I know him so well, that I am perfectly aware why he refuses to appoint his visit. He knows with what a flourish of trumpets we always receive him here, and he intends to take us by surprise."

Julie unconsciously let her thoughts flow out to this stranger, whose visit was so important to her friends—for Mr. Linden was as anxious as his wife was—and she really began to feel some curiosity to see him. But he did not come, and gradually she returned to her old musings about Fletcher Hervey. Not a single word had she heard from him since she parted from him so long ago, when his look only, not his words, betrayed the pain with which he saw her go. Not even his name had by any chance been mentioned to her; and sometimes she doubted if he still remembered her.

A rose leaf or two, a bunch of field violets, two or three lines of Italian—not immortalized by love or poetry—but a common school exercise, were all the visible signs she possessed of ever having known him. She had brought them instinctively, away from home, lest they should be discovered by her too curious sisters. She hardly knew whether she valued them or not. She only knew that she had a dread of destroying them, as if it would break some link between her heart and another, which she was hardly able to decide if it were at all right for her to keep bright in remembrance!

Among Mrs. Linden's other methods of passing time agreeably, she had a great passion for private theatricals. She had often gratified this taste, before Julie came, but thinking that her cousin would not like it, she had not proposed it until now. As the evenings lengthened, and grew cool, making it impossible to stay out of the house as they had done, Mrs. Linden's thoughts reverted to her old fancy; and with the aid of a few friends, she had contrived a very respectable dramatic representation, in which her husband and Julie, however, declined to appear. She therefore held them as prompters; the spectators being chiefly their neighboring acquaintances with their families. It closed with a dance, in which Julie was prevailed on to join, Mrs. Linden having previously insisted on her putting on a fancy dress, which she had herself worn in one of the scenes.

It was that of a flower-girl; and Julie, with her sweet, innocent face, and naturally graceful air, combined with the perfect simplicity of her manners, looked the character to a charm. As she was dancing a face, appeared a moment at the door, which made her start and tremble; it was so like Fletcher Hervey's. She lost her self-control for an instant, and lost the figure, but a moment's reflection showed her how impossible it was. As she ceased dancing, Alice came to her, and led her out of the hall. "Let us go to your room, Julie," she said. "William has a friend here, who may stay all night, and we will dress you in your own character."

She proceeded to dress Julie, who was powerless against her, in a beautiful white dress, which had just been sent home, and fastening a single white camelia in her hair, she left her, charging her not to appear below, until she was ready for her. Julie took up a book, and waited patiently. She heard some of the people driving off, and wondered that Alice did not call her to bid them good night. At last the house was still, and Alice came for her. As they turned into the little room at the bottom of the second staircase, Alice told her they were all gone.

"I did not call you," she said, "for it is so fatiguing to stand for an hour, saying nothing but good night! Besides I want William to see you in full glory. Your dress is charming, and you look as fresh as you did at five o'clock. How do you manage it? I am all worn out with the toil of seeing these people. Absolutely, I wont see them again this winter."

And she rattled on until she heard Mr. Linden come up stairs, when she left Julie alone, and passed into the drawing-room. Julie was standing by the table where she had left her; and when she heard, as she supposed, her footsteps coming back, she turned to speak to her. She looked up and saw Fletcher Hervey!

Alice had contrived this afterpiece to her evening's entertainment, with full satisfaction to herself. She had kept Julie's secret inviolate; and even Mr. Linden did not know that Fletcher had ever seen Julie before. Nor did Mr. Hervey know whom he was to meet in that little room, to which Alice had sent him for the bouquet which she had purposely dropped there.

Human nature is not always so sordid as we think. Julie had wronged her father by believing that he would not look upon a son in law without money. Mr. Bowen had seen enough, the last two or three years of his life, to make him feel that honest poverty is better than riches dishonestly acquired by rash speculations. When Fletcher Hervey, agreeably to his friend Linden's advice, stated his circumstances and his hopes to Mr. Bowen, the latter grasped him by the hand, and expressed his entire satisfaction with him as a son.

Mrs. Bowen sighed a little over Julie's narrow prospects; but when she knew Fletcher's worth, and perhaps also, when she knew that he had been appointed to a large professorship, and afterwards, too, when he became sought after as a great man, to whom *her* great men bowed down in conscious inferiority, she was not only reconciled but glorified herself exceedingly on account of her son, the professor. As to the professor himself, he could value all those things, exactly for what they were worth.

As the time drew near when Julie's marriage was set to be performed, she grew anxious that Fletcher should select some place out of the city, for their future home. Not merely for a fashionable summer residence, but for a permanent abode, like that of the Lindens. In this, too, Mr. Bowen acquiesced.

"You will begin to know me better, one of these days, my daughter," said he, when Julie told him how she had dreaded his knowledge of her attachment, and her fear that he would not permit her to live out of the city. I am beginning to see life under a new aspect. I have purchased two fine estates on the Hudson River. One is yours; the other I shall occupy myself."

It was enough. Julie's happiness was too deep for thanks. They spend a month every September at Mr. Linden's, to keep the anniversary of that evening on which they so unexpectedly met there.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

LETTER NO. II.

London, April 11, 1856.

Mr. Ballou:—The most fashionable day for visiting places of amusement in London is Saturday, and Sunday is the day for visiting the parks. It happened to be convenient for us to go to the Zoological Gardens last Saturday, and the same day two of the royal boys, the Princes Arthur and Alfred, were there also. They are very healthy, fine looking lads, but have nothing at all remarkable in their appearance, except their perfectly gentlemanly deportment.

The Zoological Gardens contain the finest collection of animals in the world. It was a lovely day that we were there—the warm sunshine, the flowers and budding trees, and the green grass, were like May rather than April. There were fine specimens of the larger animals, lions, tigers, leopards, bears, camels, giraffes, and one little giraffe that claimed the gardens for his birth-place. He was a fine looking little fellow, reached his long neck over the railing of his pen, looked at us very earnestly with his "soft black eyes," and begged very hard for some dainty morsel—but the cards on the pen forbade, and so we were forced to disappoint him. He was quite vexed at this, shook his head and frisked about in a very resentful manner. There was an artificial pond containing otters, and they too, bounced out of the water the minute we approached, and put their heads through the bars—begging. It looked droll enough to see them catch a morsel of cake and dive away into the water with it. There were pelicans "of the wilderness," owls "of the desert," and "wild asses," such as "quenched their thirst" in the Psalmist's time. Also a fine collection of birds, of all varieties of plumage, from sunny white to jet black, and numbers of other remarkables from the animal kingdom.

But above everything, go to the Crystal Palace at Sydenham. We spent Monday there most delightfully, and could go there every day for the next three months, and find every day some new pleasure. To be sure, it is not yet completed, and will not be for five years to come, but there is enough of beauty there now to delight any one. The distance to Sydenham by rail, is eight or nine miles, and for half the way you ride above the tops of the houses—if you were a little nearer them, you might look down the chimneys. The view of the palace as you approach it, is very imposing. It is situated on a gentle elevation, and its crystal walls and glittering dome "rise like an exhalation," and you almost fear it will vanish.

But if the exterior view is grand, the scene that meets your eye as you enter, is almost enchanting. It seems a realization of some dream of fairy-land. Miniature hills, covered with the verdure and flowers of the tropics, embosom a beautiful lake—from whose surface rises a crystal dome, glittering in the bright sunshine with every hue of the rainbow. Flowers of the most brilliant and delicate tints fill the air with fragrance; even our own sweet "lily of the valley" was there, and not eclipsed. Through the whole length of the aisle, white statues are scattered in profusion among the green foliage, and many of them are copies of the finest works of art in the world. Upon either side are specimens of architecture, copied from the most beautiful palaces and churches. The first you enter is a Turkish palace, you tread upon the tessellated pavement, and listen to the trilling of fountains and warbling of birds, or you may rest upon silken cushions, in a curtained recess, and dream and "make pictures" in the mellow light from the richly stained windows. Then you walk on, through an Eastern palace, then an Egyptian, a Chinese and Italian; then through an arcade copied from some old cathedral, and so on, till you are almost lost in the contemplation of so much beauty. In the galleries are the displays of merchandize of every kind and description; in the basement is machinery.

The present idea of the Crystal Palace, I am told, far surpasses that of the exhibition in 1851. The grounds around the palace are laid out at great expense, and with much taste, but the improvements are far from being completed. It is, however, a great place of resort for the fashionable and unfashionable, rich and poor, and strangers of all countries. The "season" in London is just commencing. Yesterday the queen held her first drawing-room, in St. James's Palace. In the list of presentations were the names of Mrs. Dallas, wife of the United States Minister, Miss Sophia Dallas, and others of the family. The queen wore a red poplin *traine* trimmed with gold blonde, and a petticoat of white satin trimmed in the same manner—and a head dress of opals and diamonds. The out door dress of English ladies, so far as I have observed, is less showy than the fashionable promenade costume at home. In that respect we copy the French, as we do mostly in our styles and patterns, which I must confess are more graceful than the English. An English lady told me the other day, that she could distinguish an American lady anywhere by her dress, and I think it quite possible.

Yesterday we visited the National Gallery of Paintings. It is a collection of originals by the old masters of all the different schools, and a collection to be proud of. There was a picture by Correggio, an "Ecce Homo," the scene—Jesus wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. "And Pilate said unto them, 'Behold the man.'" One might study it for a lifetime, and never weary of it. The pictures being all master-pieces, and myself not a critic nor even an "art student," of course, I cannot discriminate as to their excellencies, but only speak of the impression upon myself. "The Brazen Serpent," by Rubens, seemed to me one of the finest. The figures—Moses standing amid a group of dying, agonizing creatures, pointing them to the cross—one could never forget the expression of those faces—terror, anguish, despair—and in some the dawn of hope. Others by Michael Angelo, Raphael, Titian, Claude, Vandycke and Morillo, were very beautiful, but surpass description. The *pen* cannot give you any idea of them.

The Athenæum of this week contains a very favorable notice of a Boston artist, Mr. Gould, who has just sold a fine picture to an English gentleman. The subject—A Turkish lady just from her bath. One would think that the picture might be somewhat objectionable, but on the contrary, not the most fastidious could object. The lady is represented wrapped up in towels, reclining upon cushions; but the face is so beautiful, and the attendant, and every portion of the picture, is so well treated, that it is decidedly a gem.

I notice that Miss Warner's new book is nearly ready to be issued by Samson, Low & Co. And a new book by the authoress of the "Heir of Redclyffe," is attracting very favorable notice. Reprints of many of our best American books are sold very cheap, and circulate largely.

Truly yours, J. P. B.

CURRAN.

One morning, at an inn in the south of Ireland, a gentleman travelling upon mercantile business came running down stairs a few minutes before the appearance of the stage-coach, in which he had taken a seat for Dublin. Seeing an ugly little fellow leaning against the doorpost, with dirty face and shabby clothes, he hailed him and ordered him to brush his coat. The operation proceeding rather slowly, the impatient traveller cursed the lazy valet for an idle, good for nothing dog, and threatened him with corporal punishment on the spot, if he did not make haste and finish his job well before the arrival of the coach. Terror seemed to produce its effect; the fellow finished the coat and then the trowsers, with great diligence, and was rewarded with sixpence, which he received with a low bow. The gentleman went into the bar, and paid his bill, just as the expected vehicle reached the door. Upon getting inside, guess his astonishment to find his friend the quondam waiter, snugly seated in one corner, with all the look of a person well used to comfort. After two or three hurried glances to be sure his eyes did not deceive him, he commenced a confused apology for his blunder, condemning his own stupidity; but he was speedily interrupted by the other exclaiming, "O, never mind, make no apologies—these are hard times, and it is well to earn a trifle in an honest way—I am obliged to you for your handsome fee for so small a job—my name, sir, is John Philpot Curran, pray what is yours?" The other was thunderstruck by the idea of such an introduction; but the drollery of Curran soon overcame his confusion; and the traveller never rejoiced less at the termination of a long journey, than when he beheld the distant spires of Dublin glitter in the light of the setting sun.—*Mackenzie.*

News Glances.

Affecting Case.—The Dayton Gazette tells an affecting story of a farmer who, while selling a load of wheat at a dollar a bushel in that city, burst into tears. The owner of the mill was touched, and kindly inquired the cause of his grief. "Sympathy" was too much for him, and bursting into a tremendous "boo hoo," he replied: "My son John could have got a dollar and seventy-five cents a bushel for this very wheat two months ago!"

Autographs.—At a late sale of autographs in New York, a letter from George Washington to Thomas Jefferson sold for $7. Another relic of Washington, in the shape of a stock, worn by the father of his country in the time of the Revolution, was sold for $5. The stock was made of plain cotton, plaited, and laced up behind. Its edges are much frayed by the beard of the illustrious wearer.

American Ships.—The Paris correspondent of the National Intelligencer says, that the decree authorizing the purchase of foreign ships and placing them under the French flag, on paying a duty of ten per cent, is operating favorably for American shipbuilders.

The Law of Libel.—The late legislature of Pennsylvania passed a new libel law. The old maxim was "the greater the truth the greater the libel." This act reverses it. The greater the truth the less the libel. Under it malice is not to be inferred.

Liberia.—The American Geographical Society intend to have the region of country lying back of Liberia thoroughly explored, and are about raising the sum of $8000 to effect this purpose. The present commerce of Liberia is estimated at from $1,200,000 to $1,500,000.

Fire Arms.—The Massachusetts Arms Company at Chicopee Falls are busily engaged in filling orders for Green's patent breech loading rifle; the English government have contracted for 2000, and the French and Sardinian governments have each ordered models.

A Snake Story.—A person on the Philip Brown farm in Kingston, N. H., found embedded near a well, thirty nine black snakes, fifty nine adders and one striped snake. Their combined length was about four hundred feet.

Villanous.—A young man was arrested in the act of placing a sleeper across the track of the Portland and Kennebec Railroad, near Freeport. His name is Randall, and he was taken to Portland for trial.

Steam Tonnage.—The steam navigation of the Mississippi and its tributaries consists of 787 boats, of an aggregate tonnage of 189 064: being an increase of 20 per cent. in boats, and 40 per cent. in tonnage, over 1855.

Refined Cruelty.—By the ancient laws of Hungary, a man convicted of bigamy was condemned to live with both wives in the same house. The crime was in consequence extremely rare.

The Victoria Regia.—The Salem Gazette says that but one plant of Mr. Allen's Victoria Regia remains in health. The others are dead or dying, from the effects of the severe winter.

Charles Bochsa.—This distinguished harpist died in Australia in January. He was travelling with Madame Anna Bishop.

A Mangling Machine.—A second rate actor in Hamlet.

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OFF WITH THE BEARDS!

This was the cry of Peter the Great of Rus- who, in a moment of littleness, perfectly ri- pliable, commenced a war on the beards of subjects, which lasted more than sixty ye The illustrious legislator, soldier, ship carpe and admiral, as the starting point of his crus caused to be engraven in brass the follow sentences—*Barada detestat tosqata* (she hates useless embarrassment). The great obst Alexiovitch encountered in his attempted forms was attachment to ancient usages. T tenacity still characterizes the party of the Russians—the Raskolnicks; many of th principally among the Cossacks, would pr the loss of life to that of the cherished be Thus the common metaphorical expression Yankeedom, to signify to a man that he been taken in, "you have been shaved," in R sia expresses the most terrible indignity that befall a man.

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LITERARY.—In England they are publishing "A Rogue's Life." We hope it isn't an autobiography.

POSTAL REFORM.

Our readers are well aware that a strenuous movement is making to secure certain radical changes in our postal system—changes imperatively demanded by the progress of intelligence, and vital to the development of that intelligence. To render postal communication cheap, certain and efficient, is the hope of the reformers, and they are stimulated in their efforts by the fact that such a system as they desire to see established is no mere theory, remaining to be tested, but one which has been in successful operation in Great Britain for years; and the British official reports of each year show that the longer it works the more perfectly does its machinery move. All the details of the system have been thoroughly discussed. The first great impetus to the movement now going on, was an able pamphlet by Pliny Miles, Esq., who had studied the subject in all its bearings, and, practically acquainted with the post office department in the United States, and, having travelled extensively abroad, was familiar with the theory and practice of the post office system in foreign countries. These views, by means of the pamphlet alluded to, and of the public journals, have permeated the length and breadth of the land, and numerous large public meetings, without distinction of party, held in important localities throughout the States, have made it pretty clear that the people are in favor of and require a thorough postal reform.

Postal Reform Committees have been constituted in New York and Boston, and they are now circulating petitions to Congress, to which signatures are solicited. The petitions that are in circulation ask for the following:

1. A uniform postage of two cents on all letters not exceeding half an ounce in weight, throughout the United States. 2. Receiving houses and letter carriers in all cities and principal towns. 3. Money orders from one post office to another, for sums not exceeding twenty five dollars. 4. A uniform and low rate of ocean postage. 5. The postage on franked matter to be paid out of the treasury. 6. The abolition of compulsory pre payment. 7. The return of all dead letters to the writers.

The petitions now in circulation should be signed without hesitation. Every man, woman and child in the community is interested in having the postal system as perfect and complete as possible. The post-office is the grand machine by which civilization and intelligence are speeded in their onward march—by which society is linked together—by which great enterprises are carried forward;—in a word, our happiness, our prosperity, our property, are all dependent in a great measure on this national system of intercommunication. Every man owes it to himself to do what he can towards the perfection of the postal system. The movement now on foot deserves to succeed, and most assuredly will command success.

ROMANCE OF REAL LIFE.

We have seldom met in works of fiction with a more touching incident than the following, which actually occurred a few days since in our own State: A young man, who was convicted of bigamy at Newburyport last spring, lately served out the term of punishment for which he was sentenced. At the railroad station he was met by his first wife, who took him with her, gave him a new suit of clothes, and presented him with three hundred dollars, which she had earned since the period of his desertion. They left together for their former home, in New Hampshire. We cannot believe that the generosity, the truly Christian forgiveness, the rich confidence of this noble woman, will fail to redeem the heart of the erring man on whom these treasures were bestowed. Let us believe, for the honor of human nature, that this "angel of the household" will be rewarded, even here on earth, for her trust and her affection.

LIEUTENANT MURRAY.—Our old favorite, so long and well known to the readers of "The Flag of our Union," is now engaged in writing a stirring and attractive novelette for our columns, to follow the excellent one now in course of publication, from MRS. ORNE. The name of LIEUTENANT MURRAY is sufficient to raise vivid expectations among our readers, and to give promise of a deeply interesting story. We will not anticipate, but may premise that it will be a story of military life, the march, the camp, and the fireside!

A DILEMMA.—When the ship Merc dith was discovered to be leaking, an Irish sailor was employed at the pump—but first looked over the rail to see how high the water was on the side of the vessel. After pumping an hour, he took another peep over the side, and finding the vessel was four inches deeper than when he began, exclaimed, "Arrah, now, captain dear, I shall soon pump the sea full at this rate; for I have raised it four inches already!"

LITERARY.—Surely, the lecturing mania is at its height. A lady in New York has been lecturing on dancing, with illustrations. She probably borrowed her idea from Dan Rice:

"You wheel about and turn about,
And do jis so,
And every time you wheel about
You jump Jim Crow."

A TRIFLING CAUSE.—The refusal of an intoxicated man to pay for a melon brought on the bloody fight at Panama, in which so many Americans were murdered by the natives. But these rascals had waited for a pretext for a long time.

MAY DAY.—Our fair friends in this vicinity were only too thoughtful of us May morning, though we acknowledge it thus tardily. The fragrance of those flowers has not yet left our room, and never will leave our heart.

TOO GOOD.—The London Lady's Newspaper says that the Enlistment difficulty arose from the efforts of the British government to recruit "volunteers in *Canada!*"

OREGON.—The Indians in Oregon have lately been fighting desperately against the whites. It will be some time before they are subdued.

EDITORIAL INKDROPS.

A dramatic version of the novel of "Horse Shoe Robinson" has been played in Baltimore.

Two captains of the French army lately killed each other in a duel.

"Black Cat," the only living child of Tecumseh, is now in the State of Texas.

Marsh mud is an excellent manure for fruit trees—particularly pears.

A. J. Neafie, an American actor, is one of the best tragedians on the stage.

May Day in New England is becoming as much of a gala day as in Old England.

A son of Mr. Bower, of Memphis, was lately drowned in a Baptist church font.

The Turks, unlike the Christians, are much opposed to proselytism.

There were 60,000 troops under arms at the recent review in Paris, France.

It is said that the wearing of small bonnets induces neuralgia and other ails.

The new edifice of Columbia College, N. Y., is to be completed this year.

Planting peppergrass in cucumber hills is said to keep off the yellow bugs.

One of the latest novelties in New York is a carriage drawn by six dogs.

Why is a tired man like an umbrella? Because he's used up.

There are now nineteen parks, great and small, in the city of New York.

Madame Ida Pfeiffer has started again on her endless travels.

There is a lady in Boston who has worn as many as thirty skirts.

The island on which New York city stands was originally bought for $24.

The green house attached to the White House is a splendid conservatory.

About 200 years ago a man was imprisoned in New York for "seeing visions."

Ebenezer Francis, Esq., of Boston, pays over $13,000 per annum in taxes.

There used to be wind-mills in Wall St., New York. They still "raise the wind" there.

Rev. Sydney Smith liked a "certain amount of shyness" in kissing.

The steamboat men on the Missisippi dislike the new bridge at Rock Island.

It is proposed to supply the city of Brooklyn, N. Y., with water, for $3,500,000.

The sword worn by Napoleon at Marengo was bought by the late Czar Nicholas.

Josiah Bradlee, of Boston, has given $6000 to the Home for Aged and Indigent Females.

Gold continues to flow in from California in glittering streams.

COULDN'T STAND IT.

A farmer and his wife of our acquaintance hired a respectable young man to work for them, and, as is usual in our agricultural towns, the employed dined at their table. The lady was very polite, and as the young man was supposed to be bashful, was constantly pressing him to take another cake, another slice of pudding, etc., etc. At last, one day, after the usual solicitations, to the reply, "*Do* have another piece of pie, Mr. ——," he roared out, "No, I wont, I tell ye!—and ye needn't ask me. You'll spile my digestion—you will. I've eaten 'bout twice as much as is good for me a'ready. Every day you've been comin' that game on me!—but I wont stand it; and if you don't leave off, I'll leave to once—I will. I s'pose you think I don't know anything about the organs of the stummick; but I've been to the 'cademy tu quarters, and studied physiology, and I aint agoin' to kill myself for no white man or woman, if I du get sixteen dollars a month and board." It is needless to add that, after this explosion, he was never subjected to similar treatment.

ADULTERATION OF MILK.—The Committee on Agriculture in the Massachusetts House of Representatives have reported the following bill to punish frauds by the adulteration of milk: "If any person shall be guilty of adulterating milk, sold in this Commonwealth, by water or otherwise, he or they shall, on conviction, be fined fifty dollars for the first offence, one half of which shall be paid to the complainant; and for the second offence, shall be imprisoned in the House of Correction not less than two nor more than six months."

MORMON EMIGRANTS.—The ship Enoch Train arrived at Boston, lately, from Liverpool, with a company of some five hundred and thirty emigrants, all of whom are bound for the Mormon "land of promise," Utah. They are composed mainly of English people, with parties of Scotch, Welsh and Irish. A few are from South Africa.

A GOOD GUESS.—Flickets, who never pays anybody, was told by a servant that a person wished to see him on particular business. "What sort of a person?" asked F. "A man of color, sir." "Say no more," said F.; "I know what color well enough—it's a *dun*!"

SOMNOLENCY.—A wag writes that somnolency may be removed, by involving yourself in a lawsuit endangering your whole property. So long as your case remains undecided, you will have little inclination to sleep.

IMPORTANT INTELLIGENCE.—In a certain locality in Australia, there is a board nailed on a post, with this inscription: "When this board is six feet under water, the road is impassable." We should imagine so, decidedly.

SLOW AND SURE.—There are three things which ought never to be done in a hurry, viz: threading a needle, shooting wild fowl, and getting married.

WELL SUPPLIED.—From twenty-six medical colleges in the United States, there graduated, last year, about thirteen hundred doctors.

PROOF OF INSANITY.—Advertising the loss of an umbrella in the hope of its recovery.

BALLOU'S PICTORIAL DRAWING-ROOM COMPANION,

For the present week embraces the following contents:

"Romance and Whiskers," a tale by EMERY H. SAGE
"Weary-hearted by the Way," verses by WILLIE E. PARSE.
"Let us Laugh while we may," stanzas by CHARLES C. SAWYER.
"Twice Married," a story by MARY A. LOWELL.
"I have not thee," a poem by MARY F. BARBER.
"A Tale of a Donkey," by THE OLD ONE.
"Introspection," verses by BLANCHE D'ARTOISE.
"The Old Cathedral," a tale by RICHARD CRANSHAW.
"The Orphan's Prayer," in verse by S. H. NEWELL.

ILLUSTRATIONS

Representation of the Thousand Islands, in the River St. Lawrence.
View of the Island of Labuan, Borneo.
A figurative representation of military life, entitled Before and After.
Two large whole page pictures, one representing a Scene in the Canadian Fur District, in North America, the other, the American Indians receiving their annual payment from government.
Portrait of Rev. ELEAZER WILLIAMS, the reputed Bourbon.
Pictures of the new English Three-Horse Omnibus.
Also, a Constantinople Omnibus.
A Street Scene in Tunis.
An English Church-yard.

. The Pictorial is for sale at all the Periodical Depots in the United States, at six cents a copy.

☞ One copy of THE FLAG, and one copy of the PICTORIAL, when taken together, for $4 00 per annum.

Foreign Items.

Pasteboard from beet root is now manufactured in France.

The entire wealth of England is estimated at £3,700,000,000.

The Czar of Russia has taken off the prohibition which prevented the Russian nobles from visiting France.

There now remains in India but one native state of any considerable magnitude, that of Hyderabad, in the Deccan.

The Ottoman electric telegraph between Constantinople and Silistria is now open for the transmission of private despatches.

The river Amoor is now being surveyed, and is intended by Russia to be made the channel of vast commerce with England and America.

The canny newspaper experiment in London does not prosper. The proprietor of the London Evening News has gone into the Insolvent Debtor's Court.

The cost of towing the steam floating battery Glation from the Crimea to England, was near £12,500, although she has never fired a shot against the enemy.

A Swedish lady, described as possessing a beautiful voice, has been singing in the north of Germany, and is shortly to appear at the Opera, in Berlin, as the *Queen of Night* in the "Zauberflote."

It is proposed by a company of gentlemen from the North to ask for a charter to bring water into Washington, at a cost of $1,300,000.

A tunnel under the Mersey, from Birkenhead to Liverpool is proposed. It would, as at present arranged, be about two miles in length, of which about three-quarters of a mile would be made under the river.

Timber in France is dyed by various colors being mixed with water, and poured over by the roots of the tree. The sap is the medium through which the fluid is conveyed. It forms a kind of delicate pump, up which the artery particles run with great rapidity.

Dewdrops of Wisdom.

Vain glory blossoms but never bears.
A lie has no legs, but scandal has wings.
Have a care of a silent dog and still water.
Repentance is not to be measured by inches and hours.
Splendid qualities break forth in dark times like lightning from a thunder cloud.
The thoughtless and impatient shut their eyes to danger, rather than labor to avert it.
The fame which follows true greatness no friend need hold up and no enemy can keep down.
Be contented and thankful; a cheerful spirit makes labor light, sleep sweet, and all around cheerful.
A man's moral principles, like the dikes of Holland, or the levees of the Mississippi, need to be continually watched and strengthened. He is ruined if they are undermined or overthrown.
A good and generous man is happy within himself and independent of fortune; kind to his friend, temperate to his enemy; religiously just, indefatigably laborious, and discharges every duty with constancy and congruity of action.
The mind has more room in it than most persons think, if they would but furnish the apartments. The great misfortune is, that most modern furniture is made for show and glitter, not for use—that is about the prevalent amount of mind in present society.
Hope writes the poetry of a boy, but memory that of a man. Man looks forward with smiles, but back ward with sighs. Such is the wise providence of God. The cup of life is sweetest at the brim, the flavor is impaired as we drink deeper, and the dregs are made bitter, that we may not struggle when it is taken from our lips.

Joker's Budget.

The man "who stood upon trifles" has been blown away.

Woman's "Empire State" is matrimony. Here she is always in the majority—always *reigns* and sometimes *storms*.

An editor out West, who had been to see Macbeth performed, winds up a criticism on the play with "Shakspeare was a trump." The editor, we suppose, is a brick.

"Hans, what is the matter?" "De sorrel wagon has run away mit de green horse, and broke de axletree of de brick house what stands by de corner lamp-post across de tollgrate."

Why are the ladies of the present day like the lilies of Scripture? Because they "toil not, neither do they spin; yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of them."

The man who "held an office" got tired and let go for the purpose of resting himself a short time, when the office got away, and has not been heard from since.

There is a boy about town who is so cross-eyed that if he looks at a bottle his eyes act as a regular cork screw, and draw the cork instanter. He always imagines his nose to be a big building around the corner.

A young lady who had not received so much attention from the beaux as her female associates, said to her lover, "I told them I would wait until the chaff had blown off, and then I would pick up the wheat." Smart compliment, that.

"Why don't you buy a thingumbob, and whatdo-you-call-it your sidewalk with it every morning?" asked one neighbor of another. "Because I faint got no what's-his-name to buy it with," replied the neighbor.

A private of the Galway Rifles was recently standing sentry, when an officer, noticing that he had a black eye, charged him with having been fighting. "Please sir," the soldier replied, "was it not for that you engaged me?"

Quill and Scissors.

The New Haven Clock Company has purchased all the unfinished work, materials and machinery belonging to the late Jerome Manufacturing Company, and also leased a portion of the buildings, with the view of enlarging their business.

As nearly as can be estimated, the number of hats annually sold in New York is not far from 7,500,000, and the annual sales of this description of merchandize, exclusive of straw goods, amount to at least $8,000,000.

What contributed most to bring Æsculapius into vogue as a physician, was his luckily meeting a man that his friends were going to inter, in whom he found some remains of life, and whom he restored to perfect health.

The Pennsylvania House of Representatives has passed a bill requiring several of the cities and counties of that State to grant all applications for beer houses which are signed by twelve respectable persons.

A private of the Eleventh Regiment of Hussars, named John Dryden, who received thirty-one wounds in one day at the storming of Sebastopol, is entirely recovered, and again doing duty.

How much good the Emperor Nicholas might have done, if, instead of creating the late war with all its calamities, he had devoted the last days of his life to works of peaceful improvment!

The inkstand used by the plenipotentiaries was specially manufactured for the purpose. It is a splendid work of art, in the style of the first empire, and the cost is estimated at about 11,000 francs.

Capt. Pleasant Preston, a prominent citizen of Lynchburg, Va., while playing with his little boy, scratched the hand slightly with an arrow; inflammation, erysipelas and death rapidly followed.

An old man in St. Johnsbury, Vt., while his house was on fire, recently, carried safely out a heavy chest of drawers which three men found to be a heavy load to lift, the next day.

The peasantry in some parts of France believe implicitly in sorcery, and there is no lack of designing knaves who turn their credulity to account by pretending to be magicians.

The amount of forged land warrants already discovered, exceeds one million acres. The investigation is still in progress, and additional frauds are coming to light.

The hoops, says the New York Times, begin to decline in size, and it is easier walking in Broadway. It may not be necessary, after all, to widen the sidewalks.

The London Evening Sun was seized at the French post-office, in consequence of its appearing with a black border, as a token of mourning for the peace.

It is proposed by a company of gentlemen from the North to ask for a charter to bring water into Washington, at a cost of $1,300,000.

There are in the United States 715 churches belonging to the Quakers, and the number of attendants is estimated at 283,000.

A model judge "out South" forgot the day fixed by law for the court to begin on, and fined himself twenty-five dollars for the oversight.

Paran Stevens, Esq., of the Revere House, was in Florence at last accounts, and intends to visit Moscow before his return.

A man, named Edward Caton, was fined $10 in Albany, lately, for *attempting* to commit suicide by jumping into the river.

The Maysville and Lexington Railroad has been sold to an agent of the first mortgage bondholders for $501,000.

D. C. Labatte, late City Attorney at New Orleans, has proved a defaulter to the amount of $300,000.

Bayard Taylor is engaged on a Cyclopædia of Modern Travel, which is to be finished in June.

A little girl at East Boston recently died from the excess of exertion in jumping rope.

The Holiday Street Theatre in Baltimore has been sold to Mr. Greacon, for $52,000.

Louisville, Ky., has voted by a majority of 805 to license tavern and coffee houses.

The manufacture of cotton seed oil has been commenced at Cincinnati, Ohio.

The citizens of Roxbury, Mass., are to be taxed $125,360 the coming year.

Over $1,700,000 are annually spent in New Orleans for lottery tickets.

The Fourierite colony, in Switzerland, is now broken up.

There are twelve thousand Jews in New York city.

Marriages.

In this city, by Rev. Mr. Streeter, Capt. Francis O. Pitman to Miss Isadore Herrick.
By Rev. Mr. Taylor, Mr. George F. Harris to Miss Elizabeth J. Calvert.
By Rev. Mr. Stowe, Mr. Benjamin C. Hale to Miss Frances Kirby.
By Rev. Mr. Winkley, Mr. Samuel A. Wiggin to Miss Lavantia E. L. Conner.
By Rev. Mr. Walsh, Mr. Stephen Moore to Miss Catherine A. Haynes.
At East Boston, by Rev. Mr. Cudworth, Mr. Nathan Brewster to Miss Mary L. Beaton.
At Charlestown, by Rev. Mr. Lambert, Mr. Geo. Black of Cambridge, to Miss Mary Elizabeth Nichols.
At Somerville, by Rev. Mr. Pope, Mr. William L. Burt to Miss Martha Alice Vinal.
At Lynn, by Rev. Mr. Driver, Mr. Calvin L. Leach, of Kittery Me., to Miss Harriet M. Jackson.
At Salem, by Rev. Mr. Lowe, John J. Rayner, Esq., of Boston, to Miss Elizabeth H. Cleatman.
At Beverly, by Rev. Mr. Rich, Capt. James Briant to Mrs. Mary Hildreth.
At Plymouth, by Rev. Mr. Tomlinson, Mr. Thomas Nye Eldredge to Miss Eunice Pope.
At Gloucester, by Rev. Mr. Wheaton, Mr. John J. Bray to Miss Maria F. Porter.
At Lowell, by Rev. Mr. Dudmun, Mr. Henry R. Wentworth to Miss Augusta A. Shaw.
At Fall River, by Rev. Mr. Porter, Mr. John Hutchinson to Miss Rose Murray.
At Springfield, by Rev. Mr. Seeley, Mr. Chester B. Chaffee to Miss Louisa S. Bruce.

Deaths.

In this city, Mr. Robert Andrews, 61. Mr. Eben Henry Putnam, 28. Mr Henry M. Hill, 34. Mr. Isaac W. Mott, 22. Mrs. Louisa Wright, 26.
At Charlestown, Mrs. Ann Savage, 66.
At Roxbury, Mr. James Walker Hunt, 22.
At Cambridge, Miss Anna Jones Tyzoff, 16.
At Dorchester, Mr. Edward B. Robinson, 52.
At Watertown, Miss Almaretta Hills, 19.
At Lynn, Mrs. Hannah B. Smith, 22. Mrs. Nancy Jane Munroe, 39.
At Salem, Mr. James Ryan, 29. Widow Abigail Rutlington, 86.
At Beverly, Mrs. Harriet L. Foster, 62.
At Newburyport, Mrs. Judith Jewell, 81. Mrs. Sarah Wheelwright, 51. Mrs. Catherine M. Smith, 87.
At Worcester, Mr. Levene McFarland, 51. Miss Ellen A. Pratt, 21.
At New Bedford, Mr. George Fox Southwick, 38.
At Reading, Widow Lucinda Temple, 77.
At Plymouth, Mr. Led Morton, 73.
At Clinton, Miss Ellen F. Pickering, 30.
At North Dartmouth, Mr. William Gifford, 56.
At Edgartown, Daniel Fellows, Esq., 77.
At Nantucket, George G. Folger, Esq. 69. Miss Rebecca C. Brown, 18.
At Sterlingdge, Mr. Charles P. Wight, 28.
At North Adams, Mr. Daniel Currie, 35.
At Pittsfield, Mrs. Laura Ann Beasley, 37. Mr. Ezra Sackett, 74.
At Portsmouth, N. H., Mr. William Maynard, 40.
At New York, Capt. George E. Kilham, 42.
At Washington, D. C., Capt. George T. Hills, 53.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

SONG TO INEZ.

BY FRANK PEELLOVE.

The winds of heaven are free!
They brook no mean control;
Fearlessly bounds my heart to thee,
As a steed to reach the goal.

The skies are bright and pure—
I dream of heaven and thee;
Gazing in their pearly depths,
Thy angel form I see.

The flowers of earth are fair—
The breezes toy among;
Gently as float the sephyrs there,
Ye breezes bear my song.

The birds sing gladsome songs,
The echoes catch the stream;
Will Inez listen unto mine,
And echo back again?

The grave is dark and deep!
The heavens are high above;
When the weary heart lies down to sleep,
Will Inez weep in love?

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

LEGEND OF THE SPAW INN.

BY MAURICE SILLNGSBY.

It was rather late one pleasant Saturday afternoon, as I took up my journey from Manchester, England, in the direction of the large manufacturing town of Ashton-under-line, which is romantically situated on the ascending bank of the river Tame.

It was near sundown when I arrived, and I made up my mind I would pass the Sabbath there; so I alighted at the sign of the "Odd Whim," formerly the residence of a wealthy gentleman, who had once held a high position in church affairs, under the especial auspices of Roe, or "Old Roe," as he was called, the Israelite Prophet. This is one of four residences, surrounded by beautiful grounds, and located in the outskirts of the town, at the four points of the compass, each owned and occupied at one time, I was informed, by the more prominent dignitaries of said church.

It was a favorite prediction of old Roe's which led to the purchase of these lands. It seems that he had prophesied to his followers that the town of Ashton under line would one day become converted to the faith, and it was the intention of the faithful, at such time as the prophecy should be fulfilled, to construct a mighty wall which should effectually exclude them from the world, and these four points were to be the only entrances to the city of the faithful. But the iniquity of the prophet becoming evident shortly after this, it had the salutary effect to explode the much cherished scheme. Three of these famous estates have since fallen into the hands of some cotton lords of the neighborhood, while the other, as I have said, was converted into a fashionable inn, the name of which I have already recorded.

The next day I had the curiosity to visit the church, owned and still devoted to religious purposes by the remarkable sect which properly boasts the honor of its erection. It stands on Fleet Street, and was built during the first part of the present century. It was constructed after no particular model, and as you approach it from the main street of the town, you are half inclined to look upon it as some sort of prison. This idea is speedily dissipated, however, by the inscription which glares at you above the entrance —"Israelites' Sanctuary,"—with the date of its erection, etc. The gallery is open to visitors on Sabbath afternoons only, when such as choose are free to enter within its sombre vestibule, where they are speedily accosted by the sexton, who conducts them up a weary, winding staircase to a seat in the gallery.

On first entering, you are struck with the unusual air of splendor which pervades everything coming within the scope of your eye. The interior of the church is constructed somewhat after the plan of our amphitheatres, with circular pews of solid mahogany, in the centre of which rises a large and costly organ, of octagonal shape, with a high pointed roof. The organist, and, in fact, all the male portion of the choir, are graced with long beards, which descend quite to their waists. The female singers are attired in short-waisted white dresses, with old style Quaker bonnets and green veils, which are thrown back while singing, exposing to view many a sweet, bright face. I left the church at the conclusion of the service, highly impressed with the novel scenes I had witnessed.

Leaving Ashton under-line on the following morning, I took the road through Mosely into Yorkshire. As I advanced, the scenery about me grew wilder and more irregular every moment. After riding a couple of leagues or so, I entered upon a desolate heath, called Boothdeen, which extends for several miles along the road on either hand. The road all through this region is covered with pulverized limestone, which contrasts oddly enough with the gloomy aspect of the heath. On either hand, at short intervals, are to be seen high granite posts, which were planted on purpose, no doubt, to guide travellers during severe snow storms, or in the darkness of night. To ride through such a spot, even in broad daylight, will create in the breast of the traveller a feeling of homesickness. To add to my general discomfiture, before I could distance this gloomy region of country (I should shudder to cross it unarmed after nightfall), it began to drizzle, and then to rain steadily, and by the time I had reached the nearest house—which proved to be an inn—I might easily have wrung from my clothes a gallon of water.

The Spaw Inn, as the sign swinging in front betokened, was standing alone, within a pistol-shot of the heath, and surrounded by a few acres of beautiful green upland—such as might not have been expected in such close proximity with this sterile locality. A little beyond, with a shady lane leading to it from the main road, is still to be seen the ruins of an old gibbet; and between that and the inn is the famous Spaw Spring—famous among the peasantry for miles around for certain curative properties, which it is believed to possess, and from which the inn properly derives its name.

On entering the inn, I found several persons assembled, who, like myself, had been driven thither by the rain. The landlord was a large, rosy-cheeked man, with comfort and good cheer palpably written in his face. To judge from his appearance, he could not have fallen much short of twenty stone weight. Each new arrival—for there were several who presented their dripping persons after me—seemed to give our host additional satisfaction; for, to judge from the merry twinkle of his eye, as well as to the hearty welcome which he gave to each of us on entering, he could not have been otherwise than pleased that the rain had favored him with so goodly a company.

"It's an ill wind that blows nobody good!" he would say, rubbing his hands gleefully.

There was one sturdy fellow present, named Jake Hasp, whom, with the exception of myself, everybody seemed to know, and who seemed to know everybody. He was just then preparing to launch out into a story, which might be supposed to be of no little interest, to judge from the half dozen eager faces that surrounded him.

"I tell you what, boys," said he, "the Padfoot would frighten the stoutest hearted man in England, with his great saucer like eyes. I saw one, and I wouldn't wish to see the like again."

"Pshaw!" said the landlord, interrupting him, "who do you suppose will believe that story? The Padfoot is too big a dose for modern Englishmen to swallow. I tell you there's no such thing, Jake."

"Well, then, I tell you there is," answered Jake, stoutly; "for I've seen it, and what I've seen with my eyes—you see I've eyes, don't ye?—I believe, I do."

"Yes; but you might have been drinking pretty freely, as you do sometimes, and then you might have imagined anything."

"No, no; it's no such thing, now. I saw it as plain as I see you."

"Well, never mind; tell how it was," said one of his auditors. "I'm ready to listen to it; I be!"

"Well, it's not much of a story," answered Jake. "It's not equal to Suirs' yarn about the old gibbet up yonder" (Suirs was the landlord), "but such as it is, I've half a mind to tell it. Like enough it's better than no story at all on a rainy day."

"Yes; and like enough Suirs will tell his, then," added another of the company. "Suirs' version of the 'legend' is said to be tip top, and if the rain continues we'll have it out of him somehow."

"That we will," persisted a second; "so out with it. Blaze away, Jake!"

"Well, I'd been down at Manchester for a couple of days, and was just coming home, d'ye see," pursued Jake. "Perhaps I might have drinked pretty freely while I was there—I don't say I didn't; but I was as sober as a beadle for the full of an hour before reaching home. I'd often listened to stories of the Padfoot, but I'd never seen one at that time, and what was more, I had no great faith in believe in them either. Well, there's a lonesome bog about a mile from my house, through which I had to pass, and in the centre of the bog—as near as I can guess—there's an old log bridge which crosses the stream; and I'd been over it a thousand times, day and night, and at all seasons, but had never thought of seeing the Padfoot, nor nothing like it. Well, it hadn't been dark very long when I came in sight of it, and what should I see but a black object standing by the roadside, just at one corner, as you would pass on to the bridge. I didn't take much account of this circumstance, and so I kept trudging along; but when I came within a few feet of the object, where I could see it plain, it just wheeled round, facing me, and then I knew from the descriptions given by those who had seen it, that the thing before me was none other than the Padfoot. It had a monster head, with great flaming eyes, and the body was less in stature than a dwarf's. I was near sinking to the earth with fright; for every time I attempted to move a peg, the terrible eyes would roll round on me, till I felt the very blood in my heart freezing. How I managed to get past that dreadful bridge, I don't know; but when I did get by, if I didn't—if I didn't run, then it's no matter!"

A variety of opinions were now offered, but in the main, the story was credited, and as the rain still continued to pour down freely, there was soon after an urgent call for the landlord's story.

Our host had never thought proper to dignify his narrative with a title, although, for the last half century, it had served him as a staple article of entertainment. And on similar occasions with the present, the "Legend of the Spaw Inn" had no doubt beguiled the wearisome moments of many a gloomy inn-bound traveller, who, like myself, had been called upon to linger for a day within the sterile borders of Boothdeen Heath. The legend, with the kind permission of the reader, and the usual license granted to story-tellers, shall be told after my own fashion, for convenience sake, discarding the old style method of putting words in the mouth of a second person.

Further back than even the memory of the "oldest inhabitant" dates, there resided in the ancient and opulent city of Manchester an old gentleman, who possessed from inheritance considerable landed property in Yorkshire. His name was Matthew Sheil. He had an only son, with whom he was associated at this time in business; and although he, as well as others, persisted in advising to the contrary, the senior Sheil, though now on the verge of threescore-and-ten, was yet in the habit, as he had been for forty years before, of riding into Yorkshire, solitary and alone, once a year, to look after his rent roll. The business on those important annual occasions usually occupied him about four days in its transaction. Being of a grasping, miserly disposition, he had preferred not only the danger, but the trouble of the thing, rather than spare the stipend which a local agent, however trifling the charge, would require to accomplish the same important end.

During the last few years of his life, the son had constantly upbraided him with the folly of the thing, telling him that he would be robbed, and possibly murdered, if he went on in the same way, and advising him to place the business either in his hands or in those of some respectable agent, who would do equally as well. But no reason or objection that could be urged, was of sufficient importance to prevent him from pursuing the same course which he had marked out for himself so many years before, and from which, whether in rain or shine, he had never once deviated.

"It wuid be suir foully tu throw away as much as thaut, when I caun do it joust as well, I've doun it these forty year an' muir, and never was molested yet!"

Such was the old gentleman's parting salute on the occasion of his last visit into Yorkshire. On this occasion the son felt more than his usual disquietude, and after fretting away the first two days of his father's absence, he grew so uneasy on the third that he determined to take the road in the direction of Yorkshire, and meet him on his return. The old gentleman, during these yearly visits, had made his head-quarters at the Spaw Inn, riding all day among his tenantry, and returning thither at night. On the morning of the fourth day he invariably started on his return, so that the son knew that on the evening of the third, if nothing should have happened to him, he would be most likely to meet him there. Accordingly he hurried on and arrived at the inn in safety, just at nightfall. On entering, he discovered two men, seated on a bench, with a loaf of bread and a pot of beer between them. They were rather hard looking specimens of that turbulent class of people which infest large manufacturing towns, creating discontent among the multitude of operatives, otherwise miserable enough, which swarm those noisy, greasy and begrimmed localities.

The first care of young Sheil was to make inquiries of the landlord respecting his father, and then to see that his horse was properly cared for; for he had ridden pretty sharply during the last five miles, not having much relished the idea of walking his horse through the gloomy region of Boothdeen.

"He left the inn this morning rather earlier than usual," answered the landlord, "saying that he had much business yet to transact; but he thought he should get through in season to reach here by sunset, or a little after. He will be here very shortly now, I think. I have always thought it strange, however, that the old gentleman will still persist in riding round the country in this fashion, and at his time of life, too. Why, it is really dangerous now; I should hardly think of such a thing myself, as stout as I am. But he don't seem to mind it—not a bit! And yet I suppose a great many, besides his tenants, know what he is about?"

"Yes; but it is useless to reason with him," answered the son, "for he will do it. There is no doubt but he will continue the same practice as long as he lives, or at least as long as he is able to get about. It was my anxiety on this account that induced me to visit Yorkshire today. I expect nothing but that he will be made away with on some of these occasions."

"Does he usually collect a very large amount during these visits?" inquired the landlord, carelessly.

"Yes; too much for an old man like him to carry, who is totally unable to defend himself. He usually returns with about a thousand pounds."

The two men seated on the bench here exchanged glances.

"Well, he is very foolish to do it, that's all I can say for him," responded the landlord, with an ominous shake of the head. "I suppose he will return through Boothdeen Heath as safe as he will on any other part of the road from Halifax, however. I have never heard of anything happening on the moor."

Here the two men arose, and after settling for their loaf and pot of beer, quietly withdrew from the inn.

After they were gone, the son remarked that he felt such a sensation of uneasiness that he should wait but half an hour longer before he again took the road. It had grown quite dark since his arrival, and the darkness had tended no little to increase his anxiety. The moon had not yet risen, and the landlord advised him by all means to wait till after it had, before venturing into the heath.

For some minutes succeeding the last remark, young Sheil continued to pace up and down the room in a restless, abstracted manner. Some three quarters of an hour might have possibly elapsed since the departure of the two men, and the heralds of the moon had just rolled their first wave of light into the hungry gulf of darkness, when the silence without became broken by the sound of a horse's hoofs coming swiftly along the heath.

"That is the old gentleman!" exclaimed the landlord, throwing open the door, and peering out into the darkness. "I should know the peculiar sound of the horse's hoofs among a regiment of troopers. I never knew him to ride so before, though! I think he must have been alarmed at something. Why, he is driving at a fearful rate!"

The dull clatter of the horse's hoofs now grew louder and more distinct every moment. So intense was the anxiety of young Sheil that he was forced to lean against the door for support. In his present distempered state of mind, every additional sound seemed more than ever the premonition of evil. Nearer and nearer it approached, louder and louder rose the ringing, clattering hoof-notes, as though the very silence had suspended breath to add intensity to dread. In a moment after, the outline of a horse was visible. It approached; it entered the gate—it was riderless!

Without a word, the landlord ran into the kitchen, rallying the groom and post-boy, who had retired thither to gossip with the cook, and procuring lanterns, they all started, in great alarm, towards the heath. Young Sheil, in his anxiety, did not wait for the rest, but springing into the saddle, turned his horse's head, and spurred madly down the hill, and along the Halifax road. For about five minutes he continued to ride with unabated fury, when suddenly the horse stopped, elevated his head, snuffed the air two or three times, and then snorted vigorously. Young Sheil stretched forward over the saddle-bow, and gazed along the road. Not a dozen paces in advance of him lay a dark figure, outstretched and motionless, by the roadside. He sprang from the horse, while a sudden pang of dread shot through his heart, and feebly seizing the bridle rein, he moved forward with trembling steps. On reaching the object, it proved to be the body of a man, and on closer examination, the son could no longer doubt that he now beheld the dead body of his father! At first, he conjectured that the horse might have taken fright at something, so as to have thrown the old gentleman, who, at his time of life, might have been easily killed by the fall. But this idea was speedily dissipated on the arrival of the rest with the lanterns; for they found the skull of the old man fractured, and beside him lay the club which had probably been used in accomplishing the bloody work. A little distance off lay the old gentleman's pistol, which, for some reason, had not been discharged.

From appearances, there seemed to have been something of a struggle, as there was blood to be seen for several yards around the spot where he now lay. His pockets had been rifled of everything in the shape of money, and the murderers had so far made good their retreat. Suspicion naturally fastened itself on the two men who had overheard the conversation between the younger Sheil and the landlord, and during the next two or three days, Boothdeen Heath, and the adjacent country, were pretty thoroughly ransacked by police runners from Halifax, Huddersfield, and other large places; but all efforts to discover the perpetrators of the foul deed proved utterly abortive in every instance, and after a short time the excitement gradually wore away, and nothing further was heard or said of the murder.

Fifteen years passed away, and the circumstances connected with the Boothdeen tragedy were well nigh forgotten. The son had succeeded to the estates in Yorkshire, and like his father had kept on the practice of visiting his tenantry once a year. This was not done, however, from any penurious motive. Nothing of that kind had ever influenced the actions of the younger Sheil; but he felt an unconquerable desire to fathom the mystery, and there was a feeling that told him he could never expect to do it by remaining in Manchester. To him, there was a melancholy interest associated with the Spaw Inn, and as often as he visited Yorkshire he was sure to remain there over night, when, betwixt him and the host, the old topic of the murder was sure to be revived, and not unfrequently discussed and speculated upon till a late hour of the night.

On the occasion to which we refer, he had just returned from Halifax, as far as the Spaw Inn, where he had previously arranged to stop over night. The landlord was standing at the door when he drove up, and he remarked to him before they entered the inn, that he had been thinking of it ever, and it was now just fifteen years ago to-day since his father was murdered on the heath. While they were conversing, they observed a man approaching the inn in the opposite direction. He was dressed in a threadbare suit of black; was very pale, and seemingly much exhausted. There was a jaded, careworn expression about the face, and a restless, anxious look about the eye, which would be taken in at a glance by the most casual observer. He might have been fifty years of age, though the cadaverous aspect of his features, and the general emaciation of the body, might have led any one to pronounce him much older. He approached the landlord, and desired to know if he could be accommodated with a room by himself, as it was his present intention to stop at the inn for a few days.

The landlord readily conceded to the requirements of the stranger, whom he immediately conducted to a room adjoining his own sleeping apartment. During the time thus occupied, young Sheil had been standing in a maze of bewilderment. He had seen that face before. He had seen it somewhere under peculiar and trying circumstances—but where? It was sometime before he could obtain the real clue to his thoughts, but when it came, a blaze of startling intelligence shot out from every feature of his face, which was speedily followed by an unearthly pallor, and a sharp, nervous compression of the lips. When he entered the inn, the landlord expressed his surprise at the sudden change in his appearance, and desired to know if he was unwell.

"No, I am not," responded Sheil; "but I have an odd request to make, which, if it is a possible thing, you must comply with. It is nothing less than that you appoint my sleeping room next to this stranger's. I allude to the one who has just arrived."

"It is rather of an odd fancy," replied the host, curiously; "but if my bedroom will answer your purpose—it is the only room adjoining the stranger's—it shall be placed at your disposal."

"Thank you; it will do very well," answered Sheil; "but you need not mention it—what I have said—to any one. I have particular reasons for being cautious."

The stranger, who had retired to his room on first entering, did not again make his appearance below stairs, but on the plea of fatigue or indisposition, had ordered supper to be served in his own room, thereby frustrating Sheil in his intended scrutiny, which he had thought to enjoy at table without interruption—or, at least, without awakening any suspicions of what was then passing in his mind.

The time which necessarily intervened between this and going to bed, was spent by young Sheil in fidgetty silence. If he spoke at all, it was only in reply to some direct question pro-

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adlord, and when, at an early
n up to the landlord's room,
on to court slumber. He lay
he bed, and listened intently
st sound or movement from
a; but everything was silent
For two hours there were oc-
life coming from below stairs,
lent. The next hour seemed
duration. Never, during the
f his life, could he recall any-
cted and painful.
was a movement in the stran-
ose; he could hear him when
bed to the floor. With sus-
teeth hard set, young Sheil
. In a few moments the oc-
olously to the door and softly
le heard him creep along the
descend the stairs, open the
s out. So silently was this
no one but a listener could

oor was closed, Sheil sprang
ch overlooked the yard and
a bright moonlight night,
ut the premises was clearly
ere he stood. In a moment
round the corner and came
nlight. Here, for an instant,
ed anxiously around and up
eil drew back into the shad-
still continued to watch his
ly. After satisfying himself
r about the inn, the stranger
of the out-buildings, and pre-
carrying in his hand a spade,
ver his shoulder, and then
ious steps in the direction of
lifax road.
nt for action had now arriv-
pitating heart, young Sheil
d drew his boots on in the
started off in hot pursuit of
as much as possible within
warf trees and bushes which
. Occasionally the stranger
k about him anxiously, as
in half suspected some one
nd then, as if re assured, he
ily on again. In this way
for nearly a mile. During
, they had not followed the
d struck off to the left and
elevated part of the heath.
ger paused, and Sheil, who
s behind him, sank down in
p of bushes, where he could
ve the other's movements.
making a careful examina-
tirring the leaves all about,
the same time like one who
h to discover some coveted

e spot, though I could have
," said the stranger, speaking
ime, and advancing directly
ere Sheil was sitting. "Ha!
re are the very stones! I
t it if I had had my eyes
ext moment he kicked over
k his spade into the ground.
threw up a few shovels' full
h he stooped and picked up
n in the moonlight (it was a
ook it. Sheil knew by the
which followed the motion,
ed specie of some description
upon this point, he hastily
a retreat to the inn, where
ents before the other.
n his return, and saw him
n the shed. He saw him
from the shed; he saw him
ner; heard him ascend the
ed enter the room, undress,
Then all was silent. After
me, and becoming satisfied
fallen asleep, he descended
his way to the room which
ed, requested him to get up

he host appeared, rubbing
ing very much if his guest
s.
ll, interrupting him, just on
; "as I am a living man, I
ered my father's murderer!"
so astonished at this unex-
hat he came near dropping
held.
e managed to stammer out.
-the stranger!" responded
ly less excited than the host.
you how, for I must be in
it is possible for a horse to
there must be no noise
boy be called quickly; but
ention a word of my suspi-
verything must depend on
; for if there was the least
cite his suspicion, the bird
y return."
ions, the landlord roused
en minutes after, Sheil was

x, his first care was to pro-
the stranger's arrest; and
two of the police, started
the inn. The sun had but
drove into the yard, and
coming down stairs. He
erceiving them, but in a
itual pallor returned—the
ated look—the same rest-
night before.
Sheil, one of the officers ap-
m; but no sooner did the
intention, than he drew a
iberto concealed, and dis-
The ball grazed the offi-
no further damage to any
at after, the stranger was
id handcuffed. He was
lifax, where he underwent
e a magistrate, who com-
the next assizes. During
the time which elapsed between the examination and trial, Stephen Breck (such was the stranger's name) continued doggedly indifferent to all persuasion on the part of others in reference to the confession of his crime. He had held no conference with Sheil, and therefore did not know the nature of the testimony which he would bear against him, but congratulated himself, up to the moment of his trial, with the presumption that no evidence could be brought against him sufficient to warrant his conviction. The testimony of the landlord and groom—the post boy had died shortly after the murder—tended in no way to excite his alarm; but when Sheil was called, and stated in a clear and unshaken voice that he recognized in the prisoner on the night of his last arrival at the Spaw Inn, one of those very persons whom he had seen there on the night of his father's murder, and on whom, at that time, the suspicion of the crime had so naturally fastened itself, the prisoner began to exhibit some symptoms of alarm. When he went on still further, and stated what had subsequently transpired, how he had watched his movements, and had afterwards followed him into the heath, etc., the guilt and terror of the prisoner became so manifest as to satisfy every one who might have hitherto entertained doubts of his guilt, of his participation in the crime. Suffice it to say, that the jury, after a very brief deliberation, returned a verdict of guilty, and the prisoner was sentenced to be gibbeted on the very spot where he had buried the money.

When the murderer, Stephen Breck, became satisfied that there was no longer any hope for him, his whole demeanor changed, and he made the following free confession of his crime:

"I was born in Leeds, where I continued to reside up to the time of my father's death, which occurred when I was not yet sixteen years of age. From Leeds I removed with my father and a younger sister to Manchester, where we began life in the mill. I remained there long enough to see my sister consigned to the grave, a victim to the wear and tear of such a life—its maddening, whirling, incessant clatter, bringing death into a thousand families, that a few insignificant cotton lords might be suffered to roll in affluence, lording it over, or crushing out the great mass of life which lay shrinking or grovelling at their feet. From that hour I became eloquent on the subject of reform. If I was wronged, or if I saw another wronged, I rebuked them openly for the wrong. If they struck me, I returned the blow with interest. I was reported as a dangerous, turbulent and rebellious person. I became an outcast, and in company with others similarly situated to myself, I led anything but a praiseworthy life.

"I then started on foot, in company with a friend, for the purpose of procuring work in some of the smaller towns. We arrived at the Spaw Inn just at nightfall, where we had thought of stopping till the next day; but the conversation which we there heard, between the landlord and the old man's son, decided us in our wicked courses. We left the inn, pretending we were obliged to get on to Halifax; but no sooner had we entered on the heath than we made the rash re olve to waylay and rob the old gentleman. We did not thirst for his blood—we only desired to get possession of his money.

"Scarcely had we arranged our plan, when we heard the old man approaching. I advanced ahead of my companion and accosted him in regard to the distance to Halifax. He answered 'seven miles,' but did not think proper to draw rein. I then seized the horse by the bridle, and my companion advanced with a club. No sooner did the old man perceive our intention than he drew a pistol, which I succeeded in knocking from his hand before he could discharge it. We then dragged him from his horse, and gave him to understand that his only chance of escape depended on his yielding up his money; but his love for the base metal predominated over everything like fear for his personal safety, and so he positively refused to submit to our demands. We felt that time was precious, and knew that it would not answer to parley much longer with a person so miserly as to sell his life rather than endure the agony of a separation from the smallest fraction of his possessions. We then endeavored to rifle his pockets of their contents, but the old man fought us desperately, shouting 'murder!' with all his strength. My companion strove to choke him into silence, but in the attempt got his fingers somehow between the old man's teeth. The next instant, before I could interfere, my friend caught up his club and dealt the old man a crushing blow over the head. He straightened back with a groan, but gave us no further trouble. We soon succeeded in getting possession of a bag of gold, which he carried secreted about his person, and dragging him to the roadside, we left him there, and then struck off into the heath. After wandering about for some time, we ran afoul of a den where some wild animal had burrowed, but which was now deserted; and gathering together some bushes, we crept in and covered up the opening. Here we continued cooped up for four days, at the expiration of which time hunger drove us from our hiding place.

"On quitting our retreat, we made an equal division of the spoils, and agreed to separate, each taking a different route. We had in all about four hundred guineas each when we parted. My companion I have never seen since. I do not know where he went, or whether he is now alive. He was naturally well disposed, but withal hasty and impetuous, and easily rendered desperate by injustice. I think from my previous knowledge of his character that he has long since repented of his crime, and therefore his name shall be kept a secret.

"After separating from my friend, I journeyed on for several miles, when the idea occurred to me, if I should be suspected, and so large an amount of money be found about me, that the circumstance of itself might lead to my conviction. I therefore determined to go instantly back and bury a portion of my ill-gotten store near the spot where the crime had been committed. It seems now as though some higher power than human understanding directed me back to that fatal spot, that in revisiting it in after years it might lead to my final detection. I reserved only a hundred guineas for present uses, and buried the rest on my return to the heath. I then made the best of my way to Liverpool, where I secured a steerage passage on board a packet just on the eve of sailing, and bound to New York.

"In New York I was robbed during a fit of intoxication of every farthing I possessed. Various were the obstacles and disappointments which I encountered in the New World. Nothing which I undertook seemed to prosper. I became at first disheartened, gradually my health became impaired, and for fourteen years I led a most miserable and precarious existence. One year ago I made up my mind to return to England, dig up my buried treasure, and retire to some obscure village or hamlet, and spend the remainder of my days in peace and quiet. But Justice in this has forestalled my intentions, and I am now sentenced to expiate my crime on the gibbet."

A few weeks after rendering the foregoing confession, Stephen Breck was conveyed from the jail to the gibbet, which had previously been erected in that part of Rowbden where the tragedy had been enacted—was confined therein, with a loaf of bread and a small tank of water just in front of him, but so placed that he could not reach it; and there for many days the physical agony of the poor wretch was protracted, till death, the result of starvation, ensued. It is generally believed by those who are familiar with the legend, that Stephen Breck was fourteen days in the gibbet before yielding up his life. Then the vultures and birds of prey came and pecked away the mouldy loaf and the putrid flesh of the murderer, till nothing but a skeleton remained encased in the iron folds of the gibbet. Years passed, and the bones gradually crumbled into dust, and the four winds of heaven swept them away to mingle with their mother earth.

Thus ended the landlord's "Legend of the Spaw Inn." I visited the spot the next day, but so many years have since elapsed, that but little of the old gibbet now remains.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

COME TO THE COUNTRY.

BY N. S. HILL.

Come to the country—there's pleasure and health,
Unknown in gay cities of splendor and wealth.
There's joy on the hills, when the merry winds blow,
And flowers nod their heads in the valleys below.

A murmuring brook meanders along.
And over the hills is heard the wild song
Of the woodland birds, so happy and free,
As they flit through the trees, and over the lea.

O, leave ye the cities of bustle and show,
And to the green hills of the country we'll go,
For the land of our fathers, the land of the free,
Is the home of the happy; then come here with me.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

AN OLD BACHELOR'S WOOING.

BY T. BUCHANAME ROSS.

"HUMPH!" said Mr. Thomas Spencer to himself, as he pulled a gray hair from his left whisker, "humph! I believe I am getting to be an old bachelor! Forty-one last birthday! and there's my nephew Tom been in college two years, and got engaged to Emma Marsden, whose mother, I believe, was in love with me once, and I should not wonder if I was just a little bit taken with her. Positively, I am getting along in life some. Now it seems but two or three years since I went to brother Harry's wedding, but it must be at least twenty, for Tom is in college and Jenny has a beau. (Whew! three gray hairs over the left temple!) Now it was silly in Harry to marry so young, before he got anything ahead, though he has done pretty well, considering he has had the drawback of a wife and family all along, yet he has not half so much money as I now (that stuff I got of Barton does not help my hair a bit, and there is a bald place coming). Well, it is rather lonesome being a bachelor when all one's friends are married, or dead, or something of the sort. I believe I must go and get married, too. Pity that the girls now-a-days are so homely; not half so pretty as they were fifteen or twenty years ago.

"Let me see, whom shall I take? There is Mary Barstow—her father is rich, and she is an only child. She is not handsome enough though—I am pretty good looking, myself and I must have beauty in a wife—her foot is decidedly too large, and her hands have rather a bony look about the knuckles—no, Mary wont do.

"There is Susan Ray, young and pretty, but not rich; I suppose she would grow crazy almost, with joy at the thoughts of marrying me; but I ought to make money when I marry.

"Old Gray is rich and has daughters—let me see—Fanny—O, she is too old—near forty, I guess, thirty-five at the least, and she has got some temper too; and Bella, and Ada, the second wife's children are both engaged.

"I guess (plague take that gray hair, the fifteenth I have pulled out!) I guess I shall go and call on Susan Ray; 'twon't do to be too pointed though in my attentions at first; I may want to back out—pity they are so abominably poor. I shall have to support the whole family, I suppose."

Mr. Thomas Spencer, having pulled out all the gray hairs he could find in his head and whiskers, carefully shaved his upper lip, parted his hair with mathematical exactness, put on an embroidered shirt, a faultless vest, elegant coat, and white kid gloves, drenched his handkerchief in patchouli, and started for Mr Ray's domicile.

Susan Ray and Jenny Spencer sat at the window, deep in confidential converse, as Mr. Thomas Spencer came down the street and approached the house, for Susan and Jenny were inseparable friends and schoolmates.

"There's your uncle, Jenny!" exclaimed Susan, "how nice and elegant he looks! Which is the oldest, he, or your father?"

"Father, I believe," was Jenny's answer.

"Don't you pity poor old bachelors? I do; nothing to care for, and nobody to care for them," said Susan.

"O, Uncle Thomas doesn't need any pity, Sue," replied Jenny, "he is perfectly satisfied with himself, and thinks father was very foolish to get married; he cares about furniture and dress, and then he has got a tame parrot and a pair of rabbits to care for him. But as I was saying, Henry Jones told me it was a fact about Charley Harcourt and Ada Gray, that they were engaged, and would be married in spite of her father's opposition and—"

"Jenny, I declare your uncle has just rung! Do you suppose he has come for you?"

"I hope not; I wont go down unless he asks for me"

Susan went down in great amazement, when told that Mr. Thomas Spencer had asked for her, and when he invited her to accompany him upon a grand sleighing excursion the next day, she asked if Jenny was going.

"I suppose so," was his reply.

"Then I shall be very happy to go!" said Susan.

Mr. Spencer took his leave, rather puzzled to know what Jenny's going had to do with his escorting Susan.

Susan, too, was still more puzzled, when she found, on returning to Jenny, that she was going with Henry Jones, and not with her uncle, and the idea of riding with Mr. Spencer alone seemed too formidable to be entertained for a moment. Still worse did she feel about it, when about an hour later, William Clark, a young man whom she liked very much, called to invite her to accompany him with the same party.

"Too bad, Jenny! too bad, isn't it? Here I've been and promised to go with your old bachelor uncle, and can't go with William!" and forthwith poor Susan began to cry.

"Sue, you will make yourself sick," said Jenny, "crying so."

"Good! so I will, Jenny, and you tell Henry just how it was, and Henry will tell William, and so I will stay at home, and it will all turn out right."

So Miss Susan, whom Mr. Thomas Spencer supposed to be wild with joy at the thoughts of receiving a little attention from so wealthy and distinguished an individual as himself, was actually crying herself sick at the thoughts of being obliged, on his account, to decline the pleasure of a drive with a homely, red-headed youth, with a genial heart and busy brain, it is true, but not more than ten dollars cash in his pocket.

When Jenny went home that evening, she carefully placed upon her uncle's table a note, the purport of which was, that indisposition would prevent Susan's having the pleasure of riding with him the next day.

"'Indisposition,' hey!" almost shouted our bachelor friend, "what the ——" we will leave the rest of his exclamations a blank, as they were hardly suited for "ears polite." Suffice it to say, that the next morning saw him on the way to invite Mary Barstow to ride with him. He was there rebuffed by the news that she was engaged.

"Engaged, is she?" muttered our hero to himself. "Well, so I heard a good while ago, but didn't believe it; one is *indisposed*, and 'tother *engaged*—pursuit of a lady under difficulties—now I vow I *will* get some girl to go with me on this sleigh ride, and I *will* get married, too, to somebody. Mary and Susan will both cry their eyes out, when they find that one of them might have been the happy and fortunate bride; they think I am not in earnest, only flirting a little, I suppose; my day for that is over—too many gray hairs coming, haven't time—hope those silly girls have not spied them yet, I pick them all out every morning.

"I have it, I'll go down and talk with old Gray; he hates Harcourt like sin, ever since he —well, I wont call no names—got the better of Harcourt's father in that land trade; he'll let Ada go with me, I know, rather than with Charley. After all, Ada is prettier than Susan, and her father is richer than Mary's. She looks a little as Emma Marsden's mother used to, too"

Mr. Gray sat in his counting room calculating his gains. Mr. Gray was looking very cross indeed, because his daughter Ada was invited to the great sleigh ride by Charley Harcourt, and he did not want her to go with him, although the only protest he could allege for refusing his consent was, that he did not like him. Mr. Gray, however, was always very affable and polite to Mr. Spencer, and welcomed him with great cordiality as he entered the counting-room "on private business."

Gray sent his clerk out of ear-shot, and then told Mr. Spencer that he was just thinking of calling on him to propose their going into partnership.

"Yes, Mr. Gray," said Mr Spencer, "but we will talk about that some other time. I have come this morning to confer about going into partnership with one of your daughters; I think it is about time for me to get married."

"Yes, Spencer, my boy, so it is," returned the old gentleman, "and my Fanny will be just the wife for you; just the right age, steady, and a capital house-keeper; she more than saves her board and clothes by her good management. To be sure she is a little prim, sort of old maidish, but she'll get over that, and will make a first rate wife. Spencer, my boy, I congratulate you, I congratulate Fanny, I congratulate myself!"

"But, my dear sir," faltered Mr. Spencer, "it was not Fanny that I had in my mind. She is a fine girl, I own, but Ada was the one I meant."

"Ada! O, well, that don't alter the case much, only she wont be half so good a wife for you. She is romantic and sentimental. She'd rather read romances than stuff sausages, and eat bread than make it; and then, I don't believe she'd have you, she is bewitched by that young Harcourt, and I can't compel her to marry against her will, you know."

"O, I will manage that," replied Spencer, "she wont refuse me when she finds I am in earnest. I guess I shan't suffer by comparison with Harcourt, any day. Let her go with me to this sleigh-ride, and I'll fix it up. Stay, a bright idea has just occurred to me. You know our destination is to the town of ——, just on the State line, and one mile only, from the place where we stop, across the line, is the village of ——, famous for clandestine marriages; give me your consent in writing, and I will engage to bring her home as Mrs. Spencer, this very evening."

"Well, if you can do it with her free consent, you have mine and welcome. Here, I'll write it, 'I, Otis Gray, of ——, in the State of ——, do freely and cheerfully consent to the marriage of my daughter with Thomas Spencer, Esq.' Will that do?"

"Yes, only you have not put in the name"

"Name! O, no matter for that. I consent you shall marry any of them, as soon as you please, you take your choice, or whichever you can get."

Mr Gray went home at noon in a much happier frame of mind than he had left it in the morning, and informed Ada that Mr. Spencer would call for her at three o'clock; to take her upon that sleigh ride she was so anxious for.

Mr. Spencer went from Mr. Gray's counting-room to his brother's house, and confided his whole plan to Mrs. Mary Spencer, requesting her to board himself and wife for a few days, until he could make some permanent arrangements, not noticing Jenny, who was watering her flowers at the other end of the room. So engaged was he in making a dazzling toilet, that he did not observe, as he might, from his chamber windows, that Henry Jones was speedily called in, as he was passing the house, *accidentally*, of course, nor did he see him go out and join Harcourt in the street, nor that Harcourt soon called at Mr. Gray's, nor that Jenny ran over there in great haste and soon came back, radiant with the conscious look of possessing some charming secret. Henry Jones was likewise despatched to search out William Clark, who had been very much out of sorts, ever since Susan's refusal to drive with him, and the consequence of his interview with him was that Susan had another invitation from Clark, which she accepted, Jenny very properly deciding that if her uncle was going to woo and marry another young lady during the ride, he would not notice Susan's sudden recovery from her *indisposition*.

Three o'clock came; a file of single sleighs passed rapidly through the principal streets of ——, on their way to ——, for a supper and a dance. Mr. Thomas Spencer and Ada Gray preceded, Henry Jones with Jenny Spencer, Charles Harcourt with Fanny Gray, who, for the first time in a dozen years, condescended to join in any such "frivolous amusement," as she termed such things; William Clark and Susan Ray, Harvey Lunt and Mary Barstow, and so on until twenty-eight sleighs, each containing two of the young folks, had passed the boundaries of ——, and were on their way to the scene of festivity.

"Miss Gray," said Mr. Spencer, as they rode merrily along, "I have come to the conclusion that it is about time for me to get married; what do you think about it?"

"Really, Mr. Spencer I never thought of it before, but now you mention it, it seems very reasonable and proper."

"Spoken like a girl of sense, as you are; no foolish diffidence. Your father has given his consent to my marrying you, will you have me?"

"What are you worth, Mr. Spencer?"

"Well, that is a sensible question, too. Your father told me you was romantic and not practical, but I don't know about that. What am I worth? why about fifty thousand dollars."

"Is that all you are worth, Mr. Spencer?"

"Bless us! What's the girl thinking of? Is not that enough?"

"To tell the truth, Mr. Spencer, I always expected to marry a man worth a great deal more than that; but I will consider, and give you an answer before we go home; I will marry you unless I know of some one to marry somebody worth more, at least, some one who can make me believe he is worth more."

"You wont see anybody to day worth more than I am, I guess, for I could buy up, soul and body, every young man in this party."

Ada's eyes flashed, and she seemed upon the point of retorting; she however checked herself, and the rest of the ride was achieved in total silence. The sleighing party arrived at their destination in good time, partook of an excellent supper, and after one dance, in which Ada was Harcourt's partner, Mr. Spencer came to Ada for her decision.

"Let me see my father's written consent, first," said she.

He handed her the paper which she read and returned to him, saying:

"I have no objections to make to it."

"Then if you have no objections, slip on your hood and cloak, and meet me at the front door, where I will have the sleigh waiting. We will ride over the line and get married right off, and come back before they miss us."

"But we ought to have witnesses to our marriage, ought we not, or will the justice's certificate be enough?"

"What a head for business! Yes, ask Fanny and—well, Harcourt come with her; ask Harcourt and Fanny to come with us for witnesses, or stop—you ask Fanny; I will ask him."

Ten minutes afterwards, and two sleighs, each containing a lady and a gentleman, rapidly traversed the road which crossed the State line, and stopped at the tavern door about a mile from the house they had left.

Spencer and Harcourt assisted the ladies into the house, and Harcourt went in search of the justice, taking with him Mr. Gray's certificate of his consent to the marriage, at Mr. Spencer's suggestion, lest any objection should be raised by that functionary.

The worthy 'squire was soon on the spot, and married Mr. Thomas Spencer to Miss Gray, before the ladies had removed their hoods and veils; Mr. Harcourt and the remaining Miss Gray signed the certificate as witnesses, and then, much to Mr. Spencer's surprise, Mr. Harcourt requested the justice to perform the same service for himself and his lady. He did so, and Mr. and Mrs. Spencer signed the certificate as witnesses for Mr. and Mrs. Harcourt.

When the two couple returned to the hall, they perceived they had scarcely been missed by their gay companions, so they joined them in the dance, which was kept up with spirit until quite a late hour, but Mr. Spencer was much annoyed by Ada's dancing frequently with Harcourt, and pleading fatigue as an excuse for always refusing him; and he was not particularly pleased with being obliged to pay so much attention to Fanny, as etiquette required, under the existing circumstances.

The dance at last broke up, the sleighs came to the door, the bills were paid; the gentlemen helped their partners into the sleighs, and they soon reached their homes.

"Sister Mary, let me introduce you to my wife," said Mr. Thomas Spencer, as he ushered a lady, closely hooded and veiled, into Mrs. Mary Spencer's parlor. He left her there for his sister to make herself at home, while he went to carry his horse to the stable. When he returned, he found his brother, sister-in-law, and niece chatting merrily with a lady, unhooded and unveiled, and with the face of—*Fanny!*

"Fanny," said he, "I am glad to see you here, but where is Ada?"

"Ada! with her husband, I suppose," replied Fanny; "how should I know?"

"Where is Mrs. Thomas Spencer, madam!" vociferated the recent Benedick.

"Here, my dear," replied Fanny, courteously, at the same time handing him the certificate of the marriage of Mr. Thomas Spencer to Miss Fanny Gray, with the names of Charles Harcourt and Ada Gray as witnesses.

While this interesting scene was transpiring at Mr. Spencer's, Mr. Harcourt had driven to Mr. Gray's. Mr. Gray was impatiently awaiting the return of his daughters, in order to learn Mr. Spencer's success in his wooing. He was not surprised when Harcourt appeared at the door, for he supposed Fanny was his companion.

"Has Spencer married my daughter, Harcourt?" was his eager inquiry.

"Yes, and I have married your other daughter; will you receive us, or will you disown us? I can give her a comfortable home, even if you discard us entirely!"

"What the ——"

Blank was the good man's state of mind, at this announcement, and blank had better remain the space we might otherwise occupy with his exclamations.

"Come, father, forgive us, and let me come in," said Ada's silvery voice from the sleigh. "Spencer concluded to take Fanny, after all, and now we are married. It can't be helped, you know, here is our certificate, witnessed by Spencer and Fanny."

"Well, children, come in," at length gasped the old man. "Perhaps it is best as it is, after all; any way, we'll make the best of it. Come in!"

Mr. Thomas Spencer neither fainted nor died on account of his slight mistake. He made a most exemplary husband, a pattern of conjugal meekness, and Fanny was renowned far and near as a wonderful housewife; but there are fewer brown hairs on his crown and cheeks than there were white ones in the days of his wooing (perhaps it would be more critically correct to say *day*), and he is observed not to express his former contempt for early marriages.

RUNS BY STEAM.

One of the busiest places in the world is a railroad station about starting time. Some come early, and some are always late; but whether prompt or tardy, every one has something to do. To purchase a paper, to get a cup of coffee, to have a trunk labelled—or, greater work than all, to get a ticket—are duties that require time; and all these little things have to be done when only a few minutes of sand are left in the hour glass. Here are fat old ladies and pale faced men; single women and singular men; persons with families and people without, young and old, sad and happy, the sensible and the dreamers are all present, and have a journey before them. Some open windows and some shut them; carpet bags are hung up, bundles are upon the seats, and newspapers are unfolded, and everything is being prepared. A great many last words said; messages rattle on both sides, hands are shaken, kisses are exchanged and away we go.—*Railroad Journal.*

STEEL TOOLS.—In making tools, the artist is directed by the color of the steel while heating. The different colors direct, in tempering, to a standard. When steel is too hard, it will not do for tools intended to have a fine edge, because it will soon become notched, and if too soft it will too easily bend. Purple is the color for gravers, or tools used to work in the metals. Blue is the color for springs and instruments for cutting soft substances, such as leather, etc.—*Scientific Am.*

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[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

TO MARY T.

BY WINNT WOODBINE.

A little, laughing gipsey,
With an eye of brightest blue;
With locks of golden, curling hair,
And cheeks of rosy hue.
Ah, methinks when thou art older,
Hearts will break for love of thee;
Would that I, thy heart then winning,
All his wealth be kept for me!

Lightly o'er the bright green sward,
Tripping on with graceful tread,
With a spray of pure white roses
Wreathed around thy youthful head.
Life is bright—the present charmeth
All the thoughts of thy young heart;
Would that I, all gathering shadows,
From thy life might keep apart!

Gaily comes thy silvery laughter,
Ringing clearly through the air;
Mirthful tones and gleeful warbling,
All unknown are grief and care.
O, that thus forever singing,
With a heart all pure and wild,
I might ever thus be near thee,
Thou, thyself, be e'er a child!

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

THE PEARL DIVERS.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

About northwest from Putlam, and distant only a few miles, upon the west coast of Ceylon, was the residence of Sir John Lakin. He had come out from England many years before the time at which we open our story, and engaged in the pearl fishery. He was quite wealthy then, and in this he had an advantage over many of those who were engaged in the same business. He could command the services of the best divers, and he could buy up pearls of those who needed the money. And though he had now amassed a fortune, yet he was still in the business. Money was his god, and he worshipped it most devoutly. The baronet's wife was dead, and the only member of his family who was of his own blood was his daughter, an only child. Her name was Bella.

Bella Lakin was nineteen years of age, and was as handsome as her father was avaricious. She did not possess that classic beauty which serves sculptors as ideals of goddesses—but it was a beauty peculiarly her own. It was a beauty of goodness—a beauty that could not have had any life without a warm, noble heart to enliven and soften it. She was short in stature, round and full in frame, with ruddy cheeks and sparkling blue eyes. When she spoke she seemed ready to laugh, for a warm smile was always playing about her lips, and winking in her eyes when her soul was at ease. In short, she had one of those faces which would tempt a kiss from the lips of an anchorite.

One calm, moonlight night, when the fresh sea-breeze drove away the heat that had been so burdensome all the day, and the air was filled with the perfume of oriental spices, Bella walked in her father's garden. But she was not alone. By her side walked a youth who had known her long. His name was Allan Wilton. He was an Englishman, born in Calcutta, of poor parents, his father having been a lieutenant in the army. Allan came to Ceylon when only fourteen years of age, and had been engaged as a common pearl diver ever since—being now four-and-twenty. From his father he had inherited a noble soul, a quickness of intelligence, and a fine sense of honor. He loved knowledge, and with Bella's assistance he had had as many books as he wished to read and study. He had been with the baronet now six years, and during that time he had brought up more pearls for his employer than any other two men, if we except one native who had been dead now over a year. He was a noble looking youth, carrying national pride in his soul, and modesty and goodness in his soul and face both.

"Bella," he said, as they reached the extremity of the garden and sat down beneath a talipot tree, "I hardly think I shall spend another season in Ceylon."

"What!" uttered the maiden, gazing up into her companion's face as the smile faded away from her own. "Not live in Ceylon? You do not mean to leave us?"

"Yes—I must go."

"No, no, Allan—you do not mean so. You will not leave us."

"I fear I must, Bella."

"But wherefore? O, if you go, what shall I do?"

"You will find plenty to do."

"Ay—to sit and cry because I am so lonesome. You will not go, Allan—you will not. Tell me you will not go."

"Ah, Bella, you know not what you say. I must not stay."

"But why not?"

"Why—the reason should be plain," replied the youth, with some hesitation. "But I can speak as plainly as you wish. I surely will not hide anything from you, though I would rather you should gain the knowledge from your own understanding."

"But Allan, how can I? What is it? Tell me—tell me all."

Allan Wilton gazed some moments into the fair girl's face, and then he said, with some tremulousness in his tone:

"Pardon me, then, for the speech I now make. You know how long I have known you. You know I came here a poor boy, when you were a laughing, joyous girl—"

"And am I not the same now?"

"You may be in that single respect; but, alas! no longer a mate for me. O, I must speak plainly now! Bella, these years I have passed near you have been happy ones, for amid all my toil the light of your smiles has cheered me on. But I am a boy no longer, nor even a youth, as we use the term distinct from manhood. I am a man now, and you have grown a woman. Even now I shall never efface thine image from my heart, nor would I if I could. But if I remain longer, I shall only become more firmly bound by those ties which must break the heart in rending. O, Bella—good, noble girl—you must see it now. It would be wicked for me to stay. Plainly, now, I tell thee—it can do no harm—I love thee too well to stay longer. Now you have the truth."

The fair girl withdrew her hand from the youth's loosened grasp, and bowed her head. She remained thus some moments. Finally she looked up, and the moonbeams were reflected from the pearly tears that had collected in her eyes, and now stood trembling upon the long lashes.

"Allan," she said, in a low, agitated tone, "I do understand you, and if I have never before thought of this as you now present it, it is because I have been so happy in your company that I have not looked much to the future. For joy, I have only looked to your coming, from hour to hour, and from day to day. But do not leave me now—O, do not! I should die if you were gone!"

With these words, spoken at the close in quick, spasmodic tones, she placed her hand upon Allan's arm, and pillowed her head upon his bosom.

"But," said Allan, trying to be calm, "why should I stay, when it could only end in misery to us both? O, you should know that to live thus, we should be unhappy unless we could be united forever—and that cannot be."

"Why may it not be?" murmured the maiden, without looking up.

"How, Bella? Would you consent?"

"O, with all my heart, and all my soul!" And as the fair girl thus spoke, she clung more closely to the noble youth.

For a moment Allan forgot all else but the words he had just heard; but he would not deceive himself.

"Alas," he uttered, "I could almost wish I had never known the thing you have told me, for thy father will never consent to this—never!"

"He may—he may," cried Bella, earnestly. "He loves me, and I do not think he would see me miserable. He has money enough, and—"

"Hold, Bella. I can have as much money as we should ever want. I possess a secret that is worth more than I should dare to estimate. I know of a new pearl bank which no man save myself has yet seen. But your father is too proud to make his child with a pearl diver."

Yet Bella was hopeful. She made Allan promise that he would not go away till he could know all, and she even intimated that rather than live without him she would follow him.

"Are you crazy, my child?" Sir John Lakin cried, as his daughter confessed her love for the poor pearl diver. "Marry you with such as he? Preposterous! Why, I should as soon think of seeing you wedded to one of my native slaves!"

"But Allan is good, father, and he is worthy of the hand of any woman in the country. He loves me, and I love him."

"Nonsense, Bella. I have a husband all ready for you! One who can provide for you."

"Perhaps you mean Condor Sudham," the girl said.

"Ay—I do mean him."

"And do you mean to tell me that I must be the wife of that man?" asked Bella, speaking more with rank astonishment than with fear.

"It is all settled, my child."

Bella gazed into her father's face in speechless surprise; and no wonder. This Condor Sudham was a scion of an old Dutch family that once had a title. He was born on the island, and was now over forty years of age. He was a member of the Legislative Council, and a merchant, and was one of the most wealthy men of the country. He was a short, dumpy, coarse, dark featured man, well enough as a member of government, but never made for an affectionate friend. He was married already to his money, and wife and children would only find a secondary place in his heart.

And such was the man the baronet would have his child marry. Sudham had seen Bella often, and he thought she would make a fine addition to his estate. He would take a pride in showing her, and having her preside at his table. But the maiden herself had different opinions upon the subject.

"If I thought you were in earnest, father, I should know exactly what to say."

"Ah, and what would it be, my child?"

"I never can be that man's wife."

"Very well. You will have a father's authority to contend with, then. Be assured you shall marry with him, for so I have promised."

But the baronet found himself with more work on his hands than he had counted on. Bella grew sad and melancholy, and ere long the truth burst upon him that his child was beginning to lose all her love for him. She looked upon him as the tyrant who would crush her, and she smiled no more in his presence. He could not help noticing this, and he wished to overcome it; but yet he thought not of granting to his child the holy boon she asked. He looked upon the poor pearl diver as the only obstacle to his plans. He had no faculty of looking down into the heart. He knew of only two powers of nature—two moral and social executives; one was power of station, and the other power of money. One day he and Sudham sat in council.

"Upon my soul," said the Dutch scion, "I must have her for my wife, for I have made all my plans with an eye to that event."

"And so she shall be," the baronet returned. "She is crazy now with this pearl diver."

"Why not send him off?"

"Because I fear Bella would go with him."

"But shut her up."

"Yes—I know. But then she would moan and grieve herself away."

"Then look," cried Sudham, energetically, for a very happy thought had struck him. "Why not get him to dive for the great pearl which is sunken close by the Bangale Rocks?"

"But would he do it?" returned the baronet, catching at the idea.

"Make him do it," suggested the merchant.

"But how?"

"Promise him the hand of Bella if he succeeds."

"And suppose he does succeed?"

"He cannot. Among those rocks there is a current running so swift and furious that no mortal man can withstand it. Over twenty of the best native divers have lost their lives in pursuit of that pearl. I have seen logs of wood sunk near those rocks, with something attached to them to sink them, and in a few moments the surface of the water would be covered with splinters. I tell you if he dives there he comes not up alive."

"Very well," returned Lakin, after some thought; "if you say so, so be it."

"I do say so, and let it be done as soon as you please."

And so it was settled.

This pearl, after which Allan was to be requested to dive, was one which had been taken some years before on a bank not far from the rocks. Three divers were out, and all three of them were under water together, when an oyster of extraordinary size was seen. It was brought up and opened, and within was found a pearl as large as a robin's egg. As the boat was nearing the shore, a dispute arose among the divers as to who should receive pay for the pearl. From words they passed to blows, and in the struggle the oyster was lost overboard. It sank near the rocks, and as the oyster was dead, it could not have moved away by any volition of its own.

"No, no, no!" cried Bella, after Allan had informed her of the ordeal her father had given him to pass. "You shall not do this. O, all who have tried it have died!"

"But it must be so," returned the youth, calmly and firmly. "Your father has given me his solemn word, in presence of the councillor, Sudham, that if I bring him up the pearl I shall have your hand. If I die, then so let it be; but I feel that I shall not. Last night I had the most pleasant and promising dreams, and I have not a single fear in the prospect. Think: If I succeed—thou art mine forevermore. O, we will not look beyond this! And listen: I think I hold a secret which none of the divers have fairly considered. They have always taken the time of the whole ebb of the tide, thinking that the water would be more still then; but I am sure that the most quiet time at the bottom is after the tide has begun to come in. At the ebb, there is surely a mighty current whirling around those rocks, induced by some subterranean channel; but when the tide has turned, and been half an hour on the flood, I think the water is more calm below, though it surges so furiously at the surface. But do not dissuade me. I know the undertaking is perilous; but is what we live for thee, if I would not risk my life to gain it?"

A vast crowd were collected about the shore opposite the Bangale Rocks. The story of the strange trial which was to come off had become known among the people, and they had assembled to witness it. The chief magistrate was there, and other magistrates of that section. Bella was there with her father, and she was pale and trembling.

The hour had come—the moment of the clear ebb—but the pearl diver was not yet present. Nearly half an hour passed away, and the people began to imagine that he would not come. But just as the murmur was becoming general, a boat appeared, coming around a distant point, in which were three men. One of them was Allan Wilton. He stood in the bows of the boat, and his bearing was firm and sure. He was dressed in a close-fitting garb of oiled silk, with a simple skirt of silk about his loins which reached half way to his knees.

At length the boat stopped, and there was a hushed stillness upon the shore. The water was in wild commotion, and the surges lashed madly among the rocks.

"O, he shall not dive!" gasped Bella, clasping her hands in agony. But her father bade her be still.

Four stout oarsmen rowed the boat to the spot where the youth wished to stop, and there they held it. He did not reach the place where the water hissed and boiled, but stopped at some distance from it. A few moments the light bark trembled close by the mighty caldron, and then the youth stood upon the bows. He cast one glance upon the fair form that now leaned upon the baronet for support, and then he closed his hands above his head, and prepared to dive. There was a low murmur upon the shore, like the rumbling of a distant storm, and every eye was eagerly fixed upon that noble form. In a moment more, the diver left the bow of the boat, his body vibrated an instant in the air, and on the next the troubled waters had closed over it.

Bella Lakin stood with hands firmly clasped, her eyes fixed with a wild, vacant stare upon the spot where the youth had gone down, while every muscle and nerve in her frame seemed fixed as marble.

The minutes passed—one—two—three—four—five—and there was a quiver in Bella's frame, and her hands worked nervously upon her bosom. The color now left her lips, and a more deathly hue overspread her countenance.

But look! There comes a shadow upon the surface of the water—the element breaks, and a human form arises. It is the pearl diver! He shakes his head smartly, and then strikes quickly out, with one hand firmly closed. But he goes not towards the boat. He turns his head to the shore, and his strokes are long and stout.

Bella started eagerly forward, and then sank back again. Her lips moved, and an earnest prayer of thanksgiving went up to God!

The pearl diver landed, and walked proudly up to where the baronet stood.

"Sir John," he said, "your long sought prize is gained, and so is mine. Here is the pearl!"

He extended his hand as he spoke, and in it was one shell of the huge oyster. A filmy, muscular substance still adhered to the shell, and in the midst of it was the massive pearl!

"It is not the one!" uttered Condor Sudham, turning pale.

"No—it cannot be!" responded the baronet.

"Let me see!" shouted an old diver, working his way through the crowd. "I am the one who first found it, and I know it well, for I not only opened the shell and thus killed the oyster, but I measured the pearl. Ha! 'tis the one—the very one! and here is where I notched the shell in opening it. Gentlemen, this is the pearl!"

"Sir John," now spoke the chief magistrate, who had stood close by the baronet, "you can not retract. By my soul, he must be a wretch indeed who could snatch reward from such devoted love and matchless daring."

"Ay, ay!" shouted a hundred tongues.

"It must be the pearl," the baronet uttered. He looked up at he spoke, and found that his child was already clasped within her lover's embrace, and that upon his bosom she was weeping in frantic joy. He dared say no more.

Condor Sudham cast one look of intense chagrin upon the happy couple, and then he turned away.

Within a week, Allan Wilton held Bella to his bosom, and she was his for life; and within the next week he gained permission to fish for pearls during one year in any place which was not yet let out. He engaged his divers, and went out to the place of which he had once spoken to Bella, and there he went at work. People wondered at the vast supply of pearls he gained, and great effort was made to buy him off. But he maintained his exclusive right for the season, and at the expiration of that time, he stood second only to Sir John in wealth among all the men of the country. But this was only secondary in his life-cup. That one prize, which he gained, when he went down amid the mad waters of the Bangale, was the brightest jewel in his crown of life—the "pearl of great price!"

THE ELECTRICAL EEL.

Of the singular powers of this wonderful creature much has been written, and some things said, which appear almost incredible. This fish abounds in the rivers of North and South Carolina, and many of its wonderful exploits are recounted and recorded there. In the waters of Massachusetts Bay it is so seldom seen that the following circumstance seems worth relating, and are in the narrator's own words. Capt. Walker, of Provincetown, recently, while running a schooner from that place to Boston, was overtaken by night off Cohasset Rocks, and was running into Boston Channel in the evening.

At about eight o'clock, it being very dark, and his vessel moving slowly, he dropped over his lead to ascertain the depth of water, and in slowly pulling in the line he felt something cold upon it, and thinking it might be a bit of kelp or rockweed, was about to throw it off, when it fastened upon his hand and coiled around his wrist. He endeavored to shake off the eel, when suddenly bringing its tail around, it struck his arm with considerable force, and gave the worthy captain such a shock as sent him reeling to the deck. Recovering a little, he proceeded to seize the fish and cast it overboard, when he received a second shock from the little battery that caused him to call for aid, uttering a scream that must have been heard for miles.

Determined not to be overcome by so paltry an object as a small eel, he proceeded once more to discharge his eelship, but was a third time repulsed with a greater force than before, laying him prostrate on the forward length of deck. His men immediately rushed to the rescue, and bore the captain, almost insensible, aft, where medical aid was ordered to administer. Never having heard of such wonderful power of the electrical eel, the greatest consternation prevailed, and the vessel rushing on in thick darkness, they knew not where, the anchors were got out with much difficulty, and they waited impatiently the return of day, actually supposing some evil spirit had seized upon them, and made for the night they were to be the sport of their orgies.—*Yarmouth Register.*

UNFEELING.

A distinguished member of the Legislature was addressing a temperance society, and he got rather prosy, but showed no disposition to "let up," though the audience "waxed thin."

Finally, the presiding officer got excited, and repairing to a friend of the speaker, inquired how much longer he might reasonably be expected to speak. Whereupon the friend answered he didn't know; when he got on this branch of the subject he generally spoke a couple of hours.

"That'll never do—I've got a few remarks to make myself," said the president; "how shall I stave him off?"

"I don't know. In the first place, I should pinch his leg; and then if he would not stop, stick a pin in it."

The president returned to his seat, and his head was invisible for a moment. Soon after, he returned to the "brother" who had recommended the pin style of treatment, and said:

"I pinched him, and he didn't take the least notice at all. I stuck a pin in his leg, but he didn't seem to care a darn; I crooked it in, and he kept spouting as hard as ever."

"Very likely," said the wag; "*that leg was cork!*"—*Taunton Reporter.*

ETIQUETTE OF VISITING CARDS.

When you drop your piece of pasteboard anywhere, even in the very genteelest neighborhood, let it be a piece of pasteboard, and nothing more, except in being engraven with your name and address. Do not, at any rate, let your card be enamelled. The enamel is prepared from lead; and the process of applying it is stated, on good authority, to produce paralysis of the hands, and other miserable complaints, among the poor people engaged in this ridiculous manufacture. A shiny card imparts no lustre to the name upon it; but communicates an appearance of vulgar pretence to the table or shelf whereon it is deposited. If you rejoice in polish, concentrate that quality on your manners, conversation and boots. In order to exhibit absolutely necessary display your taste in your visiting cards, have them embossed; and then it will be as well also for you to wear lace collars and shirt cuffs of the same material. But eschew those cards that are enamelled, and which, to the enlightened eye, are glazed with what may be called a shine taken from the health of unhappy victims afflicted with palsy and colic.—*London Punch.*

ILL LUCK.

A little bad luck is beneficial now and then. If Patrick Henry had not failed in the grocery business, it is not at all probable that he would ever have been heard of as an orator. He might have become celebrated, but it would not have been from his eloquence, but the great wealth he acquired by a speculation in bar soap and axe handles. Roger Sherman became a signer of the Declaration of Independence for no other reason than that he could not make a living at shoemaking. He cut his bristles and staked his "all" on the "rights of man." The consequence was the same individual who found it "hopeless" to make shoes, in a few years became a living power in our Revolution.—*Child's Magazine.*

Jester's Picnic.

A marked and interesting tribute was paid to the acting of Mr. Wallack and Mrs. Hoey in the "Stranger," at New York, recently. A gentleman became so excited, as the play progressed, that in the farewell scene between the Stranger and Mrs. Haller, in the last act, when the latter has the papers securing to her an independence, he was completely carried away by his feelings, and cried out in a trembling voice—"Take it, you fool, take it!" The effect was electric upon the audience, and the actors were for a moment disconcerted, but continued the scene.

The Heathen at Home.—An old clergyman, one Sunday, at the close of the sermon, gave notice to the congregation that in the course of the week he expected to go on a mission to the heathens. One of the deacons, in great agitation, exclaimed:

"Why, my dear sir, you have never sold us one word of this before. What shall we do?"

"O," said the parson, "I don't expect to go out of town."

The body of Moliere, the dramatist, being refused a place in consecrated ground, the king (Louis XIV.) sent for the archbishop, and demanded to know the cause of the consecrated earth. The archbishop not liking to acknowledge ignorance, answered, all on a little hesitation, "twelve feet." "Well," replied the monarch, "let the grave of Moliere be dug 'fifteen feet deep, and thus all difficulties will be got over."

The late Judge Wilde, while at the bar, was quite famous for his apt repartee. He was once trying a case, and labored very hard to obtain a certain answer from a reluctant witness. The opposing counsel interrupted him with the ride remark—"Ah, it is no use, brother Wilde, to pump the witness further—you are only on a wild goose chase." "Just so," said Mr. W., "a wild(e) on one side, and a goose on the other."

"You may talk to me," said an old soaker, "about your export and your import—you may cleverly quit your hair gite as gras as a dutcy snow-bank of report and rapport—you may shout until the nose of your boots and the seals of your body are pegged out, conversig the Turkish Porte and seaport, but give me genewine old port, double X brand: them's the sort for me."

Leger de Main.—We see that a stationer in Oxford Street says Punch, has patented a "spring-back ledger." Not knowing anything about ledgers, we feel competent to offer an unbiased and practical opinion on the subject, and candidly confess that for the life of us we cannot see how an account can be "carried forward," when every page of it is bound to "spring back."

Dialogue on Spring.—Blanche—"O, is there not, dear Emily, something delicious about spring. We shall soon have all the dear little birds singing, and the banks and the green fields covered with beautiful flowers!"

Emily.—"O, yes! and with it will come all the new bonnet shapes from Paris, and the lovely new patterns for morning dresses."

There is a physician in Troy who now and then deals in a little sharp practice. Whenever business is dull, he gives a juvenile party, and so crams the rising generation with pastry and warm lemonade, that in less than twenty-four hours a cholera morbus sets in among the young friends that keeps him profitably employed for the next three months.

When you hear a girl plead to get off from going to the "monthly concert," Sunday evening, because of a "dreadful headache," make up your mind that Mr. Silver, the young jeweller, will call to console her about the time the old fiddle have passed the second square. Headaches henceforward will be a chronic malady, until a card with "Mrs Silver" is in circulation. Queer chap, that headache.

In a chancery suit, one of the counsel describing the boundaries of his client's land, said, in showing the pan of it—"we lie on this side, my lord." The opposite counsel then said, "And we lie on that side." The chancellor, with a good-humored grin, observed, "If you lie on both sides, whom will ye have me believe?"

In 1667, the laws against witchcraft being in force, one Jane Wenman was tried before Sir John Fawell, a native of Worcestershire, and her adversaries swore that she could fly. "Friends," said the Judge, "can you fly?" "Yes, my lord." "Well, then, you may; there is no law against flying." She vanished.

It is refreshing to come across such a gem as the following:

The first bird of spring attempted to sing,
But ere he had sounded a note,
The fell from the limb in the form of a bird was him—
The music had fix'd in his throat!

"Bob, did you ever double the Cape of Good Hope?" "Guess I have." "When?" "Last night, when I put my arm around the cape that belongs to the dress of a young lady whom I have good hopes of making Mrs. Dusenberry."

A traveller arrived at a country tavern, ordered an omelette, which was cooked with all. He managed to eat it, and then called the mistress of the house and said: "What made you put so much in this omelette?" "Well, to tell the truth," she replied, "the eggs were so shocking bad." Canuld.

An Irish comedian having appeared before a Dublin audience in an extremely dirty pair of white duck trowsers, a person in the gallery, who had heard the observations of those around him, exclaimed, "I say Mr. ——, would not your ducks be better for a swim?"

A doctor, on calling upon a gentleman who had been some time ailing put a fee into the patient's hand, and took the medicine himself which he had prepared for the sick man. He was not made sensible of his error till he found himself getting ill and the patient getting better.

A schoolboy who was studying geography, was asked by his teacher, "what he in going from the Baltic Sea to Portugal, he would pass through any rivers?"

"Why, yes sir," said the rapid student. "I should go as straight as I could."

"Julius, you say you've left Mr. Allen and gone to live with Mr. Green. How did you come to do that?" "He urged me." "Who urged you?" "Mr. Allen." "How so?" "With a big boot. I gave his wife ease, and he kicked me off for stops."

Old Gruff entered a barber's shop a few days since, where a very talkative fellow was taking him by the nose said: "How would you like to be shaved—I have two ways?" The way which don't require talking," was the reply.

"Don't stand there loafing," said a professor at Union to three students, standing where they should n't. "We're not loafing, sir," said one; "there are only three of us, and it takes *leaven to make a loaf.*"

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ELVIE THE

THE HOMICIDE (

A TALE OF THE NINE

BY MRS. CAR

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CHAPTER XX.

ELVIE RECEIVES AN OFFER OF MARRIAGE FROM VALMONT.

Valmont had not since John Hunsdon's imprisonment even called on Elvie, thinking that pressing his suit before the first whirl of excitement and agonizing emotion of her and those dear to her had time to settle down into a more passive sorrow, would injure rather than promote it. As yet, everything, so far as he could discover, went to implicate John Hunsdon. There was no look—no secret whisperings, to indicate that suspicion had even glanced at himself, or any other person, except the prisoner. What he recalled to mind with the most uneasiness, except the loss of the articles which have several times been alluded to, were certain hints and expressions of Bernin the teamster, the morning after the murder at Simpson's hotel. They filled him with alarm at the time, which it was difficult to conceal, and still at times, they flashed so vividly upon his recollection, that he actually recoiled, as if from the weight of a heavy blow. But as he had never since heard from the man, he began to imagine that his fears had caused him to attach too much importance to expressions which in reality had little meaning.

Nor did the remembrance of the horror manifested by him, in presence of the woman who entered the chamber as he stood by the body of Harder, have a very tranquilizing effect on his spirits. But, as the woman did not appear to have considered it worth mentioning, he began to console himself with the thought that what took place must have been magnified to his imagination.

The time had now come when he must see Elvie. He waited till rather late in the evening, when, as he had reason to believe, he should find her alone. In this, his expectations were not disappointed, though the chilling coldness which she manifested at his appearance, was not very flattering to his hopes.

Elvie, after his first entrance, remained silent, showing by her manner, it was her wish that his visit should be a short one.

"I have done great violence to my inclinations, Miss Hunsdon, as you must be aware, in not calling long before now," said Valmont, breaking the silence which was now embarrassing.

He waited as if in expectation of an answer, but as she did not speak he went on.

"It is hardly necessary for me to say how deeply I have sympathized with you. Were it otherwise, I should be devoid of the common feelings of humanity; for by what I have seen and heard, I'm convinced that you regard Mr. Hunsdon with as much affection, as if he was your own father."

"If I do, it is because he is worthy of my affection."

"*Has* been, you might say, but I honor you the more, for the love which will not permit you to forsake him, now that his name is blighted. I am not like Herbert Beverly. You are the same to me, as before this sad affair took place, and to show you that I am sincere in what I say, I now offer you my heart, hand and fortune."

"I cannot accept your offer, Mr. Valmont."

"Is there nothing which would tempt you?"

"I can think of nothing."

"To save your father, would you not?"

"It is useless for me to answer that question, as it could not save him."

"You are certain that he must die?"

"No. I have not abandoned all hope yet."

"It is the opinion of every one, that he will be found guilty, after which you know what must follow. Can you bear to think of it?"

Elvie did not speak, nor look up, but a perceptible shudder ran through her frame.

"Marry me, and he shall be saved, and you and your mother will be saved from a worse now, that will cling to you, as long as you live."

"How can it save him?"

"I will enable him to escape from prison."

"You don't know my father as well as I do, or you would know if the doors of his prison were left open, he wouldn't go forth as a fugitive,